

# Public Document Pack



## NOTICE OF MEETING

<b>Meeting</b>	Children and Families Advisory Panel
<b>Date and Time</b>	Tuesday 16th October 2018 at 1.30pm
<b>Place</b>	Chute Room, Ell Court, The Castle, Winchester
<b>Enquiries to</b>	members.services@hants.gov.uk

John Coughlan CBE  
Chief Executive  
The Castle, Winchester SO23 8UJ

## FILMING AND BROADCAST NOTIFICATION

This meeting may be recorded and broadcast live on the County Council's website. The meeting may also be recorded and broadcast by the press and members of the public – please see the Filming Protocol available on the County Council's website.

## AGENDA

### 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive any apologies for absence received.

### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

All Members who believe they have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any matter to be considered at the meeting must declare that interest and, having regard to the circumstances described in Part 3 Paragraph 1.5 of the County Council's Members' Code of Conduct, leave the meeting while the matter is discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with Paragraph 1.6 of the Code. Furthermore all Members with a Non-Pecuniary interest in a matter being considered at the meeting should consider whether such interest should be declared, and having regard to Part 5, Paragraph 2 of the Code, consider whether it is appropriate to leave the meeting while the matter is discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with the Code.

### 3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Pages 5 - 12)

To confirm the minutes of the previous meeting.

### 4. DEPUTATIONS

To receive any deputations notified under Standing Order 12.

**5. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

To receive any announcements the Chairman may wish to make.

**6. HAMPSHIRE ADOPTION SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT 2017-18**

(Pages 13 - 76)

To consider a report from the Director of Children's Services in relation to the 2017-18 Annual Report of Hampshire's Adoption Services.

**7. REGIONAL ADOPTION AGENCY (Pages 77 - 86)**

To consider a report from the Director of Children's Services on the Regional Adoption Agency.

**8. PROGRESS REPORT ON THE CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD**

(Pages 87 - 96)

To consider a report from the Director of Children's Services giving details of the progress made by the Children and Families Advisory Panel's sub-committee; the Corporate Parenting Board, since it's establishment last October.

**9. UNACCOMPANIED ASYLUM SEEKING CHILDREN (UASC) IN HAMPSHIRE (Pages 97 - 104)**

To consider a report from the Director of Children's Services providing an update on Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) in Hampshire.

**Exclusion of the Press and Public**

To resolve that the public be excluded from the meeting during the following item of business, as it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present during this item there would be disclosure to them of exempt information within Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, and further that in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, for the reasons set out in the report.

**10. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING - EXEMPT (Pages 105 - 106)**

To confirm the exempt minutes of the previous meeting.

**ABOUT THIS AGENDA:**

**On request, this agenda can be provided in alternative versions (such as large print, Braille or audio) and in alternative languages.**

**ABOUT THIS MEETING:**

**The press and public are welcome to attend the public sessions of the meeting. If you have any particular requirements, for example if you require wheelchair access, please contact [members.services@hants.gov.uk](mailto:members.services@hants.gov.uk) for assistance.**

County Councillors attending as appointed members of this Committee or by virtue of Standing Order 18.5; or with the concurrence of the Chairman in connection with their duties as members of the Council or as a local County Councillor qualify for travelling expenses.

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# Agenda Item 3

AT A MEETING of the Children and Families Advisory Panel of HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL held at the Castle, Winchester on Monday, 25th June, 2018

Chairman:

\*Councillor David Keast

Vice Chairman:

\*Councillor Roz Chadd

\* Councillor Martin Boiles  
\* Councillor Ann Briggs  
\* Councillor Fran Carpenter  
\* Councillor Pal Hayre

\* Councillor Jackie Porter  
Councillor Robert Taylor  
\* Councillor Malcolm Wade

\*Present

## 29. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Taylor.

## 30. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

All Members who believe they have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any matter to be considered at the meeting must declare that interest and, having regard to Part 3 Paragraph 1.5 of the County Council's Members' Code of Conduct, leave the meeting while the matter is discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with Paragraph 1.6 of the Code. Furthermore all Members with a Personal Interest in a matter being considered at the meeting should consider, having regard to Part 5, Paragraph 4 of the Code, whether such interest should be declared, and having regard to Part 5, Paragraph 5 of the Code, consider whether it is appropriate to leave the meeting while the matter is discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with the Code.

Councillor Porter declared an interest in Item 8 on the agenda as she is Chairman of a Pre-School within Hampshire.

## 31. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the last meeting were reviewed and agreed.

## 32. DEPUTATIONS

There were no deputations on this occasion.

## 33. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman had no announcements to make.

**34. WORK OF THE YOUTH OFFENDING TEAM**

With the Chairman's agreement, Item 6 on the agenda was deferred to a future meeting as an Inspection was taking place of the Youth Offending Service. Feedback on the Inspection would be provided at the next meeting of the Panel.

**35. OVERVIEW OF PLACEMENTS IN CHILDREN'S HOMES 2017-2018**

The Panel received a report from the Director of Children's Services providing an overview of placements in Children's Homes in 2017-2018 (Item 7 in the Minute Book).

The Panel were provided with an update on progress made since the Residential Strategy was implemented which was seen as a flagship strategy, based on the provision of an emotional and warmth-based parenting approach in Children's Homes. The Panel noted that five purpose built new homes had recently been completed, and Ofsted had rated all of the eight operating Children's Homes in Hampshire as 'Good' or 'Outstanding'. Members attention was drawn to Section 4 of the report which highlighted moves for children and staff as the build programme progressed.

Officers informed Members that a total of 50 children had been looked after in children's homes in the period 2017/18 and Section 6 of the report gave greater detail of the admission figures. Details of the number of children discharged during this period were also highlighted and it was heard that of the 24 children discharged, 5 children under the age of 16 were returned to their family or foster carer which demonstrated positive progress in areas such as helping parents with parenting skills.

The Panel noted the increase in the number of children in placement as of 31 March 2018 compared to the previous year and this was due to the opening of the new homes. Officers drew Members attention to the support for young people and the close working with Adult Services to ensure that young people moved forward with support, and within their own timescales.

Members were informed of the strategies put in place to address issues such as recruiting staff to the new build homes and it was heard that children and young people in the homes were actively involved in the recruitment process.

It was noted that overall, the Residential Strategy was progressing well and there had been positive feedback for homes, with exceptional praise from an Ofsted Inspector for Crofton House in Havant.

In response to questions, Members heard that:

- Partners in Practice would be on-line in September which would involve work by multi-disciplinary teams.
- Ofsted ratings for Children's Homes could be downgraded for reasons such as having to place a child in emergency care, and Ofsted had been questioned regarding reasons for giving specific ratings to Children's Homes.

- That regulations were in place to ensure that children were placed in homes which were age appropriate, and with other age appropriate children. The department would continue to work closely with Adult Services to ensure the transition of young people to the right care resources once they reached the age of 17.
- That whilst no new homes were currently being planned, demand for places would be closely monitored.
- It was noted that the number of children placed in children's homes more than 20 miles from Hampshire was currently 14%, and this could be explained for a variety of reasons such as children seeking asylum and finding the right home for children displaying certain behaviour. Members heard that this was also an area which was constantly monitored and held to account.

RESOLVED:

That the Children and Families Advisory Panel note the progress of the Residential Strategy.

### 36. **FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICE PROGRESS REPORT**

The Panel received a report from the Director of Children's Services which provided the Panel with information about the progress of the Family Support Service over the last twelve months (Item 8 in the Minute Book).

The Panel heard that the Service had brought together a wide range of skilled practitioners, offering effective interventions and the number of families engaged with the Service was higher than previously reached before the Service commenced. The role of the Early Help Hub was explained to Members, who noted its targeted service and how it identified appropriate agencies to support children and families at Level 3. It was highlighted that the number of cases open at Level 3 Early Help Hub at the end of February 2018 was 3288 children, with 45 per cent held by the Family Support Service in the Early Help Co-ordinator role, with the other 55 per cent co-ordinated by another agency acting as the lead Early Help Co-ordinator.

The role of Evidenced Based Parenting Groups was explained to the Panel and it was noted that a termly timetable of groups and courses were published and these had been identified to meet the needs of its local community. Attention was drawn to the importance of continuing supported engagement with families stepping down from Level 4.

The Outcomes Star assessment tool had been implemented in April 2017 to track progress and outcomes for all Level 3 cases, and Members heard how this supported families and methods of measuring engagement and progress were explained.

Members noted the support available to families assessed as Level 2 and it was heard that group work and surgery sessions aimed to prevent families needs escalating to Level 3 or Level 4. It was heard that the new Level 2 service had been well received by partner agencies, and officers also explained the range of

innovative interventions being driven by Hampshire's Family Support Service for children and families.

In conclusion, Members noted the effectiveness of the Family Support Service in playing a key role in promoting the educational attendance and attainment of Hampshire's children.

In response to questions, Members heard:

- That the Family Support Service was an evolving service which would work closely with families where there was need identified.
- That there was a significant amount of support available to ensure children were kept safe on-line.
- That data was in the process of being collected in relation to the Outcomes Star assessment tool, and that the Service as a whole was continuing to evolve.
- That discussions with the police about implementing a pilot of the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) programme were underway, and it was heard that this had proved successful in other parts of the country, with the aim to keep children out of care.
- That the right structure was in place for schools and other professionals to raise concerns relating to children and families needs.
- That money was allocated for activities depending on local needs, and demand for activities was responded to.
- That in terms of home schooling, parents would need to give a reason as to why they had chosen to home school their child. There would not be a duty for the Local Authority to then visit home schooled children from an education perspective.

Members requested that an update report be brought back to a future meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the Children and Families Advisory Panel note the continued progress of the Family Support Service.

### **37. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting as it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present during this item there would be disclosure to them of exempt information within Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, and further that in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, for the reasons set out in the report.

38. **KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

The Panel received an exempt presentation from the Director of Children's Services on key performance indicators (Item 10 in the Minute Book).

[See Exempt Minute]

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Chairman, Children and Families  
Advisory Panel

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## HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

### Report

<b>Committee/Panel:</b>	Children & Families Advisory Panel
<b>Date:</b>	16 October 2018
<b>Title:</b>	Hampshire Adoption Service Annual Report 2017-18
<b>Report From:</b>	Stuart Ashley

**Contact name:** Rachel Reynolds

**Tel:** 01489 587054

**Email:** rachel.reynolds@hants.gov.uk

#### 1. Recommendation

1.1. That the Panel notes the work of Hampshire's Adoption Agency.

#### 2. Summary

2.1. The purpose of this paper is to share the Annual Adoption Report for Hampshire Children's Services for 2017-18.

2.2. This report is compiled under the National Minimum Standards 2013 (Standard 25.6) and the Care Standards Act 2000. Its purpose is to inform Senior Managers of Hampshire County Council and Members of the County Council of the management and outcomes of the Adoption Agency from 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018.

#### 3. Contextual information

3.1 The County Adoption and Integrated Recruitment Service comprises of a Service Manager who manages the Team Managers responsible for a county wide Adoption Child Care Team, Adoption Assessment Team, Adoption Support Team and the Panel Advisory Service.

3.2 The current Service Manager has been in post since 1 January 2016 and some of the functions of the panel service are now shared between the Team Managers. A Panel Coordinator has been in post since September 2016. The two Adoption Child Care Teams (East and West) became one County Team from the 1 September 2016 which has resulted in efficiencies and consistencies of processes.

3.3 Appendix A of the report sets out data of the key activities of the service for 2017-18.

#### **4. Finance**

- 4.1. There are no additional financial considerations as a result of this report that are not being managed in day to day operational practice.

#### **5. Performance**

- 5.1. The purpose of the Annual Adoption Report is to document the performance of the Adoption Service.

#### **6. Other key issues**

- 6.1. This report has an obvious connection to the Regional Adoption Agency report also being received by Panel on 16 October 2018.

#### **7. Consultation and Equalities**

- 7.1. No consultation has been undertaken.

#### **8. Future direction**

- 8.1. Performance in the Hampshire Adoption Agency will continue to be monitored.

**CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:****Links to the Strategic Plan**

<b>Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:</b>	yes
<b>People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:</b>	yes
<b>People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:</b>	yes
<b>People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:</b>	yes

**Other Significant Links**

<b>Links to previous Member decisions:</b>	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
<b>Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives</b>	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
National Minimum Standards for Adoption Care Standards Act	<b>2013</b> <b>2000</b>

**Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents**

**The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)**

<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
None	

## **IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:**

### **1. Equality Duty**

1.1. The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

**Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:**

- a) The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant characteristic connected to that characteristic;
- b) Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- c) Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

### **1.2. Equalities Impact Assessment:**

Children in care are one of the most vulnerable groups in society. Children's early experiences can have long-term impacts on their emotional and physical health, social development, education and future employment. Most children are taken into care because of abuse or neglect. Children entering the care system are likely to have complex needs. Adoption is one approach to permanence that is appropriate for some children, providing secure and stable families.

### **2. Impact on Crime and Disorder:**

2.1. Through providing high quality adopters for children, the anticipated longer term impact on crime and disorder is positive.

### **3. Climate Change:**

- a) How does what is being proposed impact on our carbon footprint / energy consumption?

- b) How does what is being proposed consider the need to adapt to climate change, and be resilient to its longer term impacts?

No impact on climate change identified.

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**Children & Families Management Team Meeting  
for Hampshire and Isle of Wight - (CFMT)**

<b>Date of meeting</b>	4 <sup>th</sup> September 2018
<b>Report author</b>	Rachel Reynolds
<b>CFMT Sponsor</b>	Amber James
<b>Subject</b>	Annual Adoption Report – 2017-18
<b>Confidential</b>	No
<b>People attending for the item</b>	Rachel Reynolds

**Executive Summary**

The purpose of the Annual Adoption Report is to inform Senior Managers of the management and outcomes of Hampshire's Adoption Agency from 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018.

The concluding summary outlines the areas where Hampshire has been strong during 2017- 2018. The areas that will be addressed during 2018-19 are set out in a work plan for the coming year.

## Adoption & Integrated Recruitment Service

### Annual Report

1 April 2017 – 31 March 2018

#### 1. Introduction

- 1.1. This report is compiled under the National Minimum Standards 2013 (Standard 25.6) and the Care Standards Act 2000. Its purpose is to inform Senior Managers of Hampshire County Council and the Executive side of the County Council of the management and outcomes of the Adoption Agency from 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018.
- 1.2. The County Adoption and Integrated Recruitment Service comprises of a Service Manager who manages the Team Managers responsible for a county wide Adoption Child Care Team, Adoption Assessment Team, Adoption Support Team and the Panel Advisory Service.
- 1.3. The current Service Manager has been in post since 1 January 2016 and some of the functions of the panel service are now shared between the Team Managers. A Panel Coordinator has been in post since September 2016. The two Adoption Child Care Teams (East and West) became one County Team from the 1 September 2016 which has resulted in efficiencies and consistencies of processes.
- 1.4. Appendix A sets out data of the key activities of the service for 2017-18.

#### 2. Services Provided by Hampshire Adoption Agency

##### 2.1. Integrated Recruitment Team

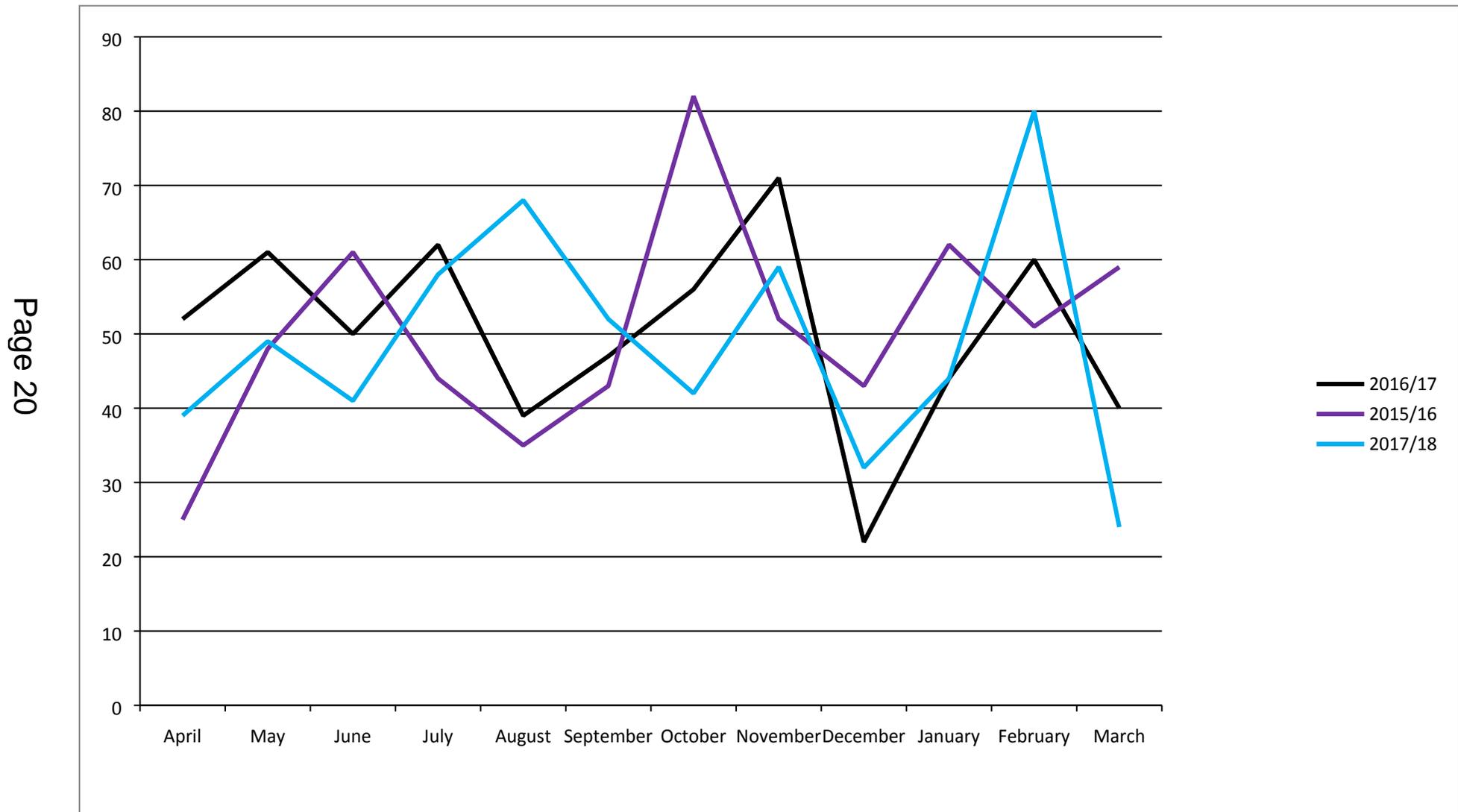
The Team operates a front door service for all enquiries and recruitment for adoption (and fostering). The Team is made up of 2.5 Social Workers; 2.5 Children and Families Support Workers; 1.5 Marketing Assistants; an Assistant Team Manager and a Team Manager who also manages the Fostering Assessment Team. .

- 2.2. Over the year, the Team has dealt with **588** enquiries from individuals seeking to adopt. This compares to a figure of **604** for last year and **605** for the previous year.

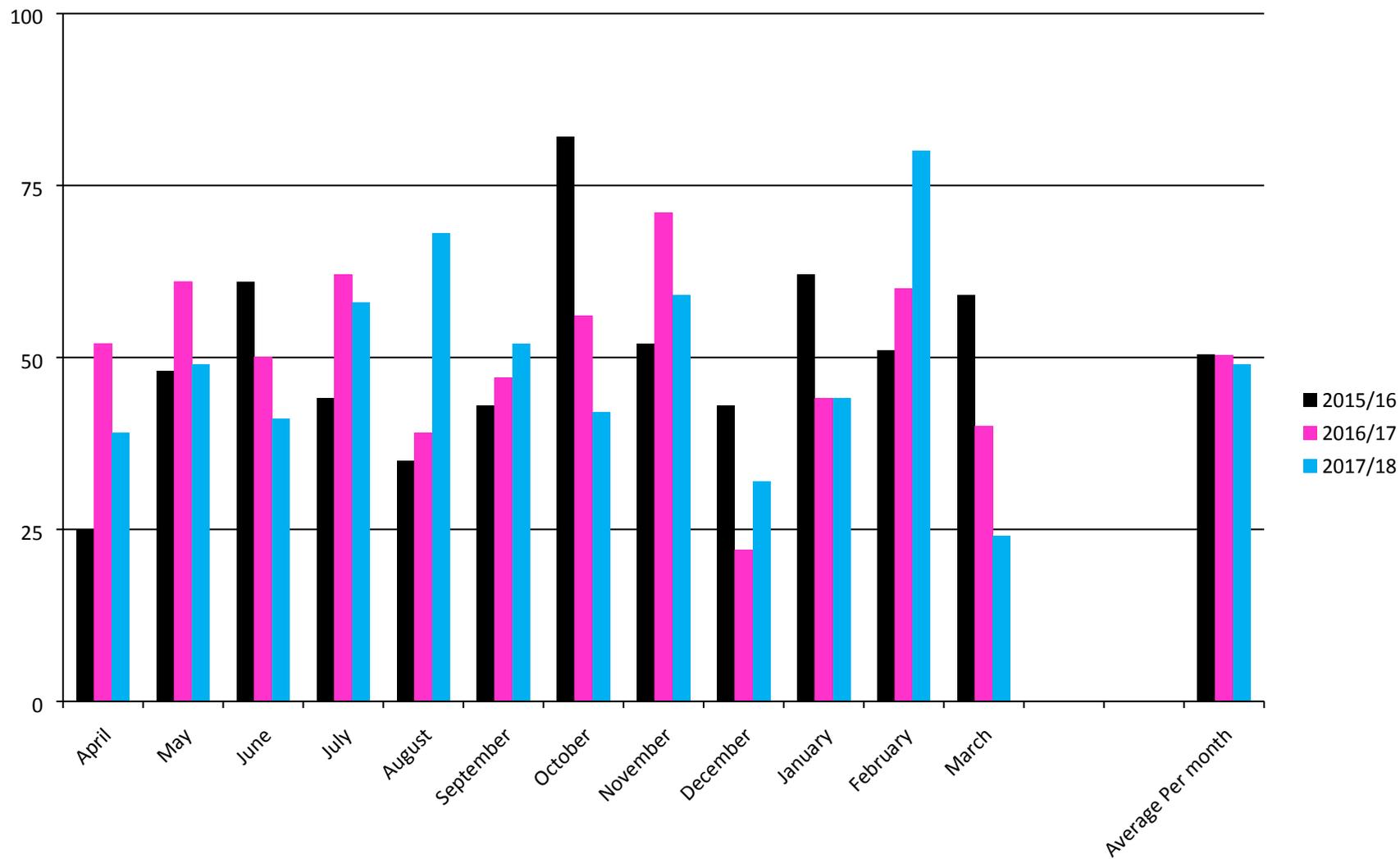
Although a slightly lower number of enquiries this year, the conversion rate from enquiry to the number forwarded to assessment has been significantly higher compared to the previous two years.

The graphs below compare the number of enquiries with the previous two years.

April 2015 – March 2018



Comparative figures to 2015-16 and 2016-17



**April 2015- March 2016 - Total 604**

**April 2016- March 2017 - Total 605**

**April 2017- March 2018 - Total 588**

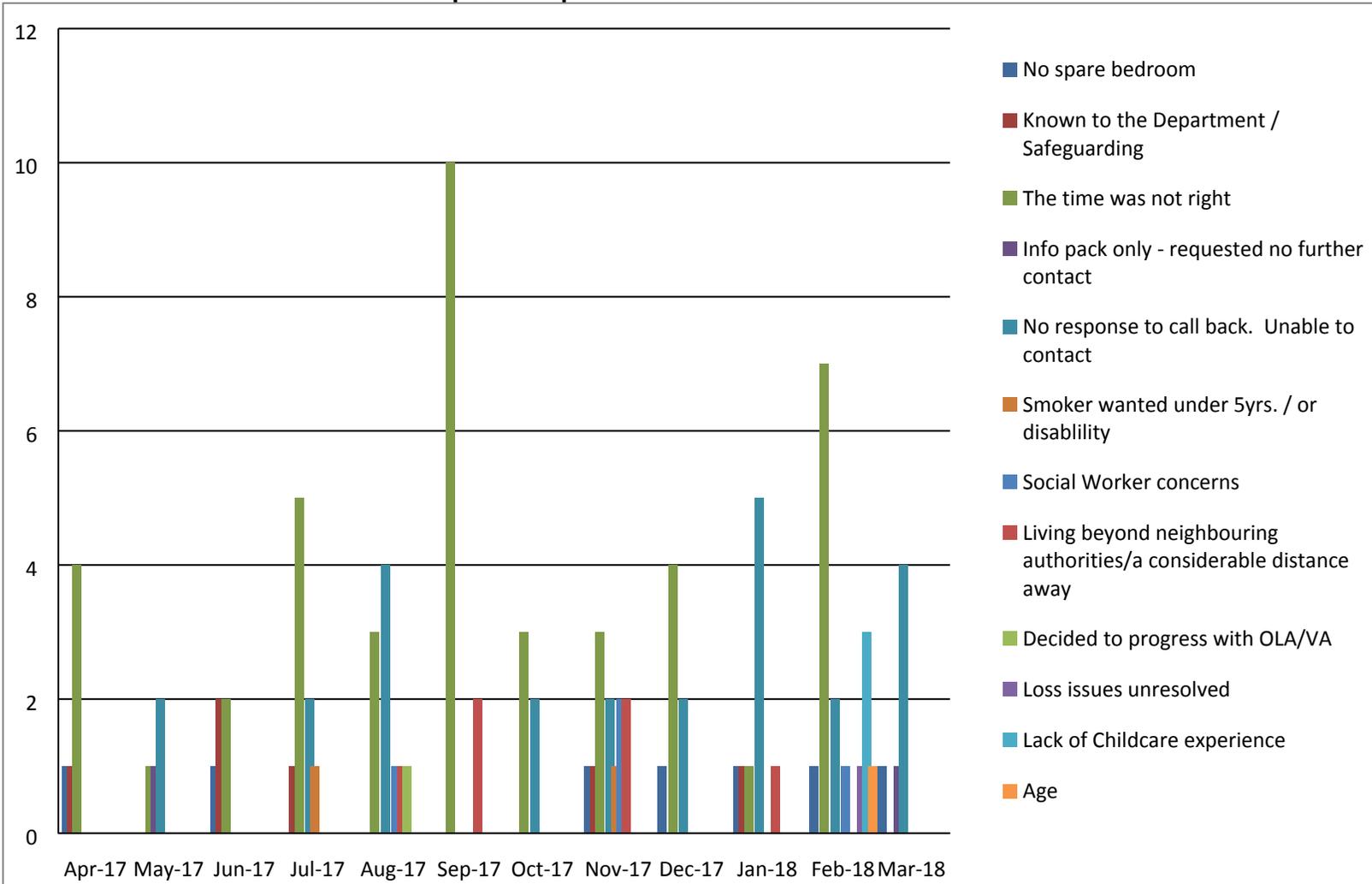
**2.3** The Recruitment Team is also responsible for holding regular Information Sessions for those who have enquired about adoption and want to hear more. These sessions are held on a fortnightly basis in the evening and are co-delivered by Social Workers from the Recruitment Team and Adoption Assessment Team as well as having an adopter present to share their personal experiences. During busy periods, additional Adoption Information Sessions have been offered to capture applicants as soon as possible rather than the next available space, and in keeping with the regulations of offering information within ten working days of an enquiry. Over the year, a total of **25** Information Sessions were held, compared to **26** last year and **23** during 2015-16.

**2.4** Of the **588** enquiries received over the year, **100** enquiries were closed at the point of the duty call, which is significantly less than 2016-17 when **170** were closed at this point and 2015-16 when **267** were closed. The most significant reason for closure during the previous two years was being unable to contact the enquirer as despite a number of attempts to call them, they did not respond. **69** were closed for this reason last year and **176** during 2015-16. However, just **25** were closed for this reason this year, which reflects the Integrated Recruitment Team's focus on making all efforts to ensure all applicants who have enquired are contacted, by telephoning applicants during evenings and weekends, in addition to emailing and texting them. The most significant reason for closure this year was enquirers reaching the decision following the duty call that it was not the right time for them to progress, with **43** being closed for this reason.

Other reasons for enquiries not progressing included;

- lack of child care experience
- applicants not having a spare bedroom
- applicants smoking and wishing to adopt a child under the age of 5 years/child with a disability.
- applicants living a considerable distance away
- applicants being known to the Department through previous concerns

The graph below sets out the reasons adoption enquiries were closed.  
**Numbers and Reasons for Adoption Enquiries Counselling Out**

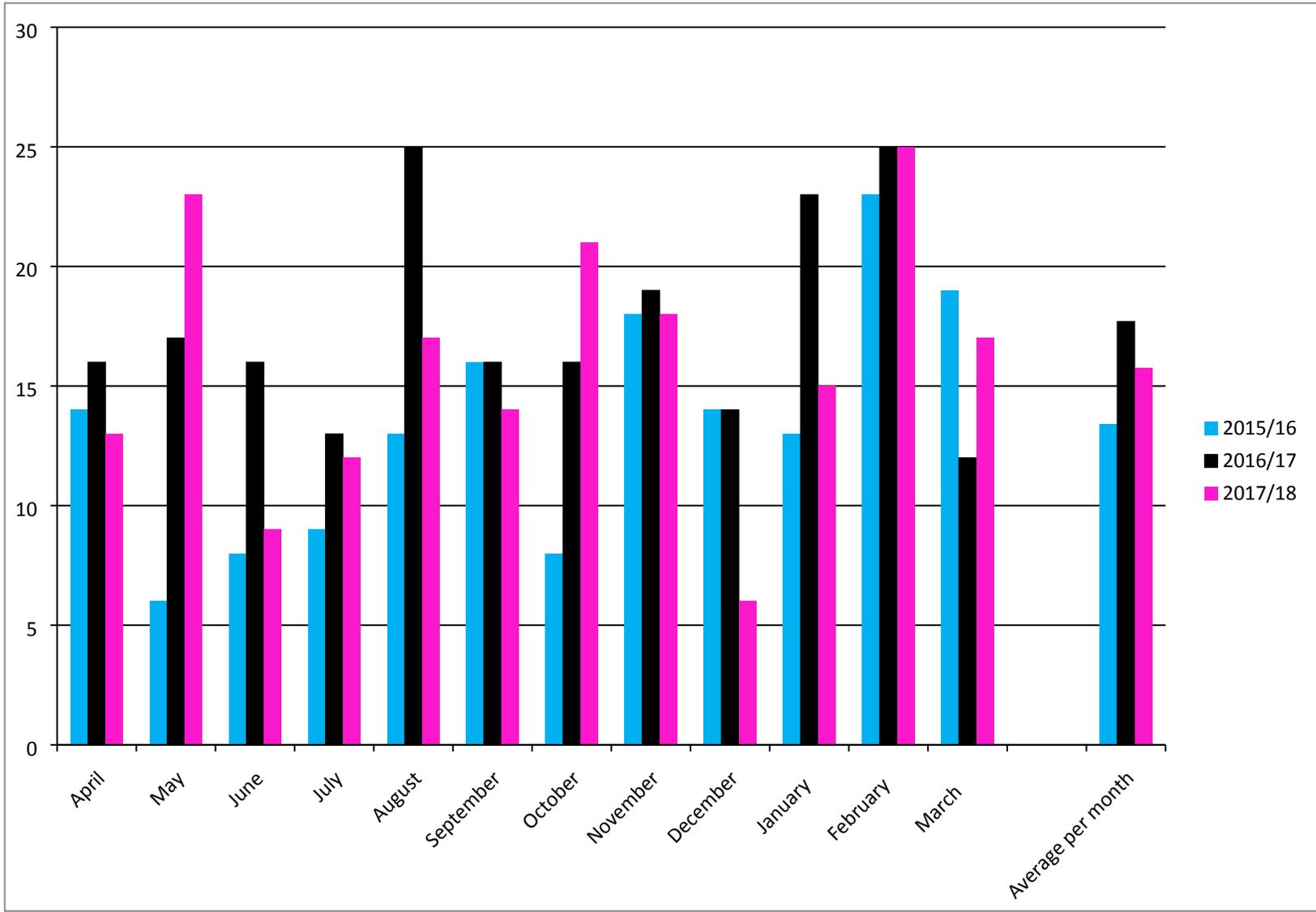


- 2.5.** The Integrated Recruitment Team's focus on addressing the high closure rate at the point of the duty call, has led to a significantly lower number being closed this year, compared to the two previous years. In addition to ensuring all applicants are contacted prior to any enquiry being closed, telephoning, e-mailing and texting applicants during evenings and weekends to ensure a telephone discussion with them wherever possible, the period that contact is pursued has also been lengthened and all closures are now monitored by the Assistant Team Manager.
- 2.6.** Over the year, a total of **189** prospective adoptive households attended an Adoption Information Session. This compares to a figure of **212** last year and **161** for the previous year.

The graphs below compare numbers of households who attended an Information Session to the previous two years.

#### Number of Households Attended

	<b>2015/16</b>	<b>2016/17</b>	<b>2017/18</b>
April	14	16	13
May	6	17	23
June	8	16	9
July	9	13	12
August	13	25	17
September	16	16	14
October	8	16	21
November	18	19	18
December	14	14	6
January	13	23	15
February	23	25	25
March	19	12	17
<b>Total</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>189</b>
<b>Average per month</b>	<b>13.4</b>	<b>17.7</b>	<b>15.75</b>



- 2.7.** Although a slightly lower number of households attended an Adoption Information Session this year compared to last, the conversion rate has been significantly higher with **46.6%** being forwarded to assessment, compared to **36.3%** last year. The lower numbers during 2015-16 in households attending was due to the criteria being different to that which was introduced in April 2016. The criteria had previously included applicants birth children needing to be over 5 years old and potential adopters being willing to adopt a child over the age of 4 years. The profile of adopters that are needed in Hampshire was reconsidered in April 2016, new criteria was introduced and an updated recruitment strategy put in place. The drive has been to pull in potential adopters who have the child care skills and experience to meet the needs of the children that are waiting in Hampshire. There are no blanket bans and a pre-stage visit has been introduced to look at adopters' potential on an individual basis.

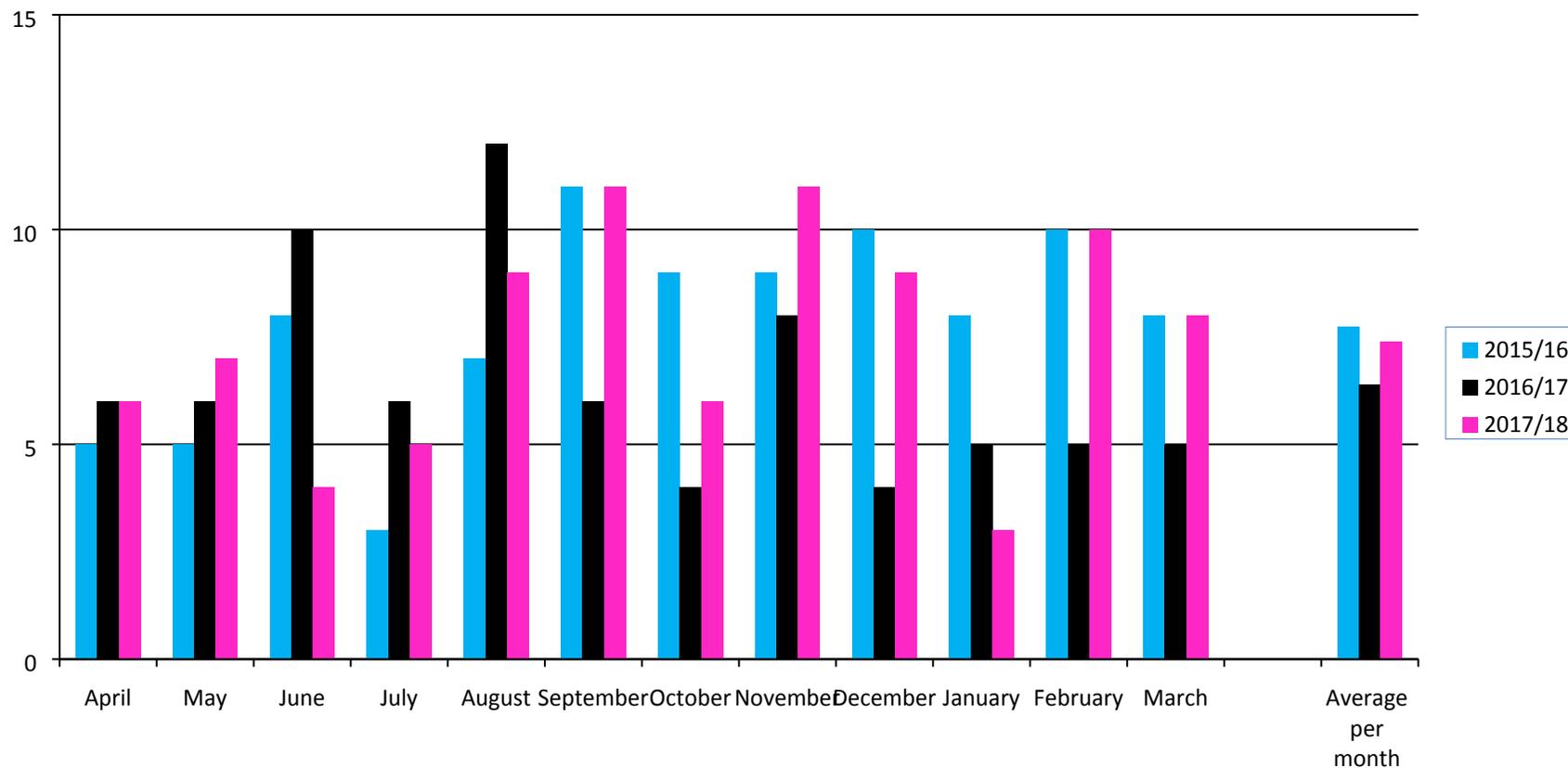
The drive, in particular during 2017-18, has been to recruit adopters who have the skills and experience to adopt sibling groups and children with disabilities.

- 2.8.** Of the **189** prospective adoptive households who attended an Information Session, **90** Registration of Interest Forms were received, an average of **7.5** per month. This compares to **77** during 2016-17, an average of **6.4** per month. Although still a slight decrease compared to 2015-16, when **93** were received (an average of **7.8** per month), due to the introduction of the pre-stage visit and a Registration of Interest Form only being left when applicants are suitable, a much higher number, however, have been progressed to Stage 1 and forwarded to the Assessment Team.
- 2.9.** During 2017- 18, **125** pre-stage visits were undertaken, an average of **10.4** per month.
- 2.10.** During 2017-18, just **2** out of the **90** Registration of Interest Forms submitted were not progressed. The reason for one not progressing was due to the applicants being smokers and wishing to adopt a child under the age of 5 years. The other was due to the applicants wanting a very young baby and due to their age this was not feasible. These visits were undertaken by a new member of the team/independent social worker and, with reflection, the Registration of Interest Forms should not have been left.

This compares to all of the **77** Registration of Interest Forms submitted being progressed last year. This was the first time since the new regulations and introduction of the two stage process (April 2013) that all Registration of Interest Forms have been accepted into Stage 1 and is due to a more targeted approach during the duty call and Adoption Information Sessions, in addition to the introduction of the pre-stage visit in April 2016. The pre-stage visit has enabled all applicants to be visited to discuss their interest in adoption following

attendance at an Information Session. This has allowed their potential to be discussed on an individual basis and households have been supported to complete a Registration of Interest Form when it has been felt they have a lot to offer. Similarly, when it has been felt that they were unsuitable at this time, this has been explained to them face to face and completing a Registration of Interest Form discouraged, rather than applicants having the disappointment of submitting a Registration of Interest Form which is not progressed. Guidance has been given regarding how to build on their potential for contact in the future.

### Number of Registration of Interest Forms Returned

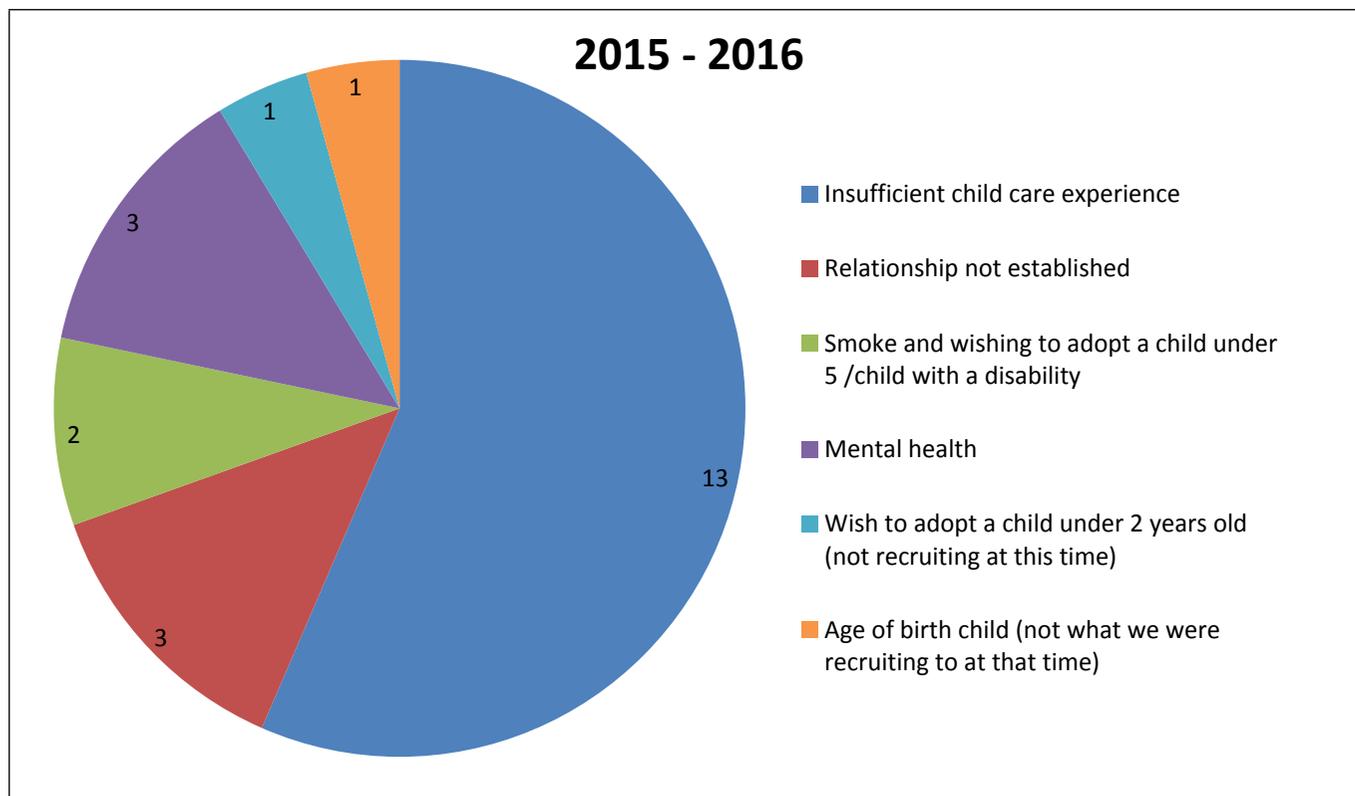


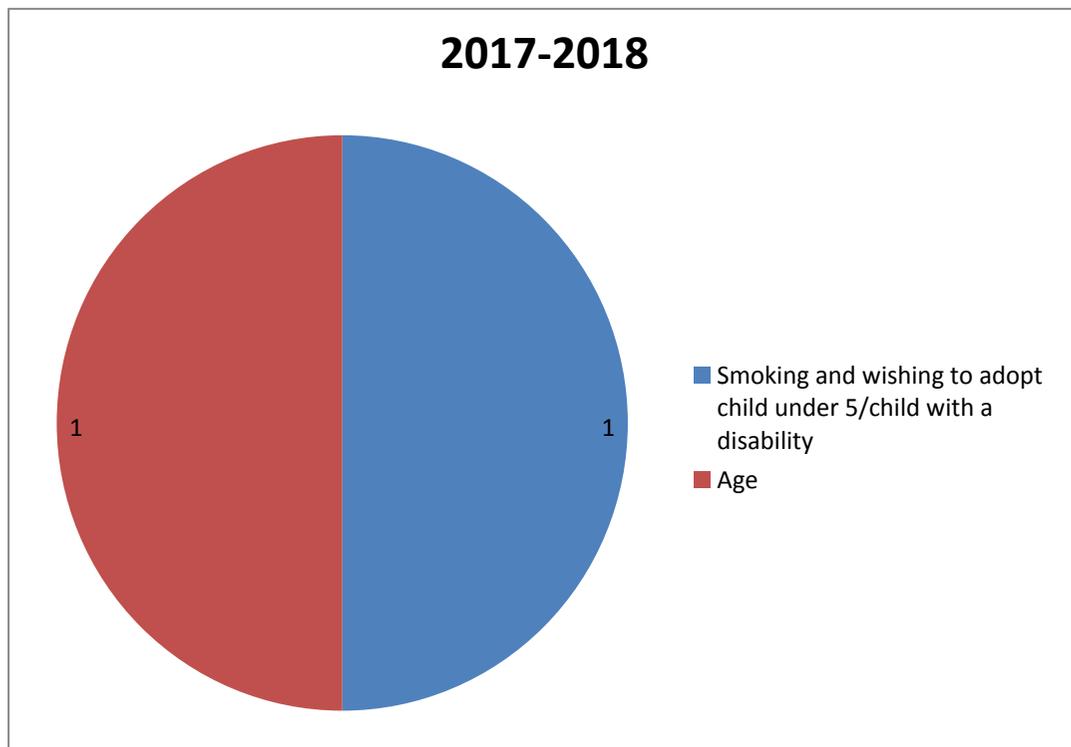
April 2015- March 2016 - Total 93

April 2016- March 2017 - Total 77

April 2017- March 2018 - Total 90

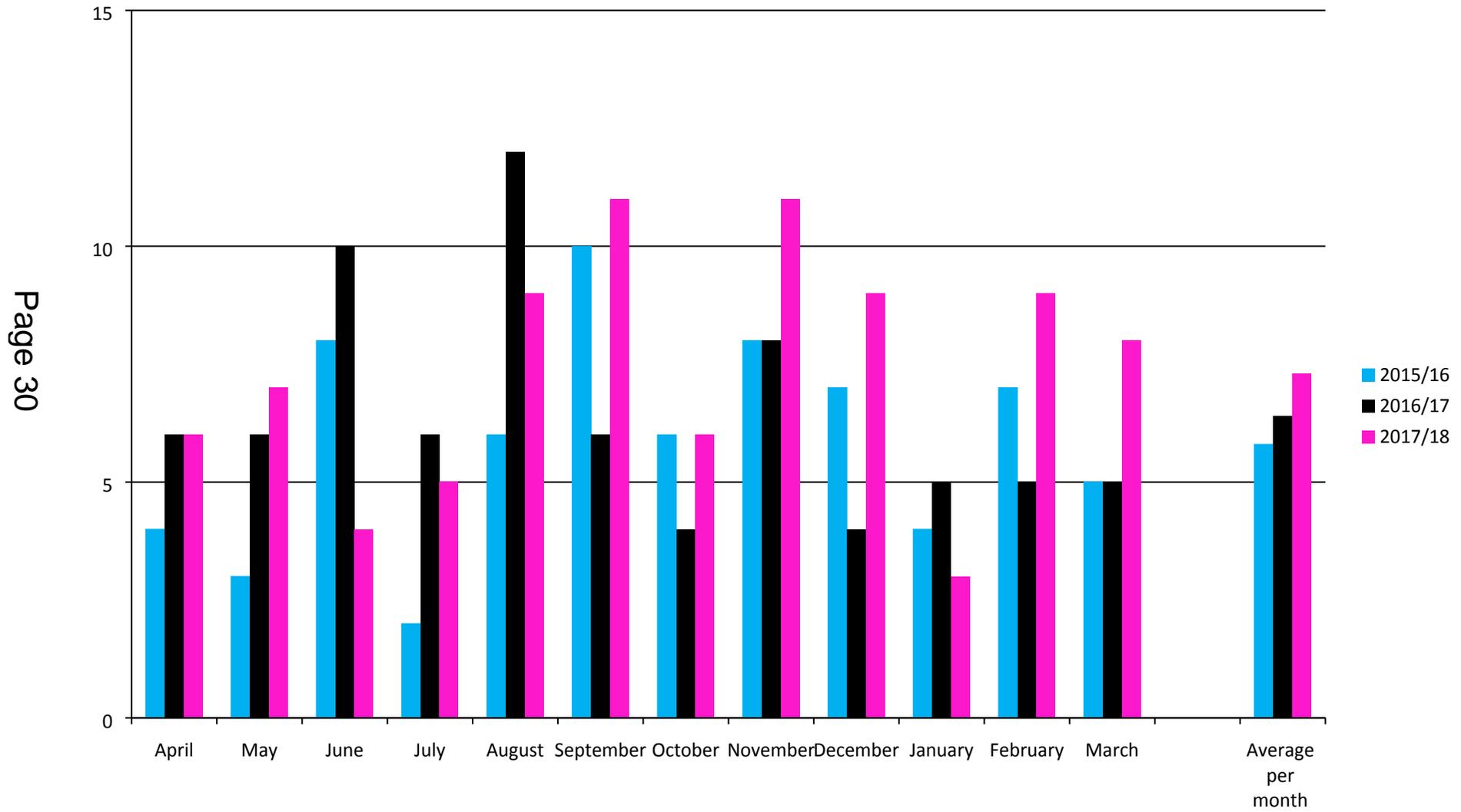
In comparison, during 2015-16, **23** Registration of Interest Form's out of a possible **93**, were not progressed. The most significant reason for counselling out adoption applications following receipt of their Registration of Interest Form was due to insufficient childcare experience, with **13** of these Registration of Interest Forms being closed for this reason.





2.11. The graph below compares the numbers forwarded to Stage 1 to the previous two years.

### Applicants forwarded to Assessment Team/ Stage 1



**April 2015- March 2016 - Total 70**  
**April 2016- March 2017 - Total 77**  
**April 2017- March 2018 - Total 88**

**2.12.** A total of **88** Registration of Interest Forms were forwarded to the Assessment Team/Stage 1, with an average of **7.3** per month. This compares to **77** during 2016-17, an average of **6.4** per month, and **70** during 2015-16, an average of **5.8** per month.

**15%** of enquiries were, therefore, forwarded to assessment compared to **12.75%** during 2016-17 and **11.6%** during 2015-16.

Only **3** of the Registration of Interest Forms were for specific children, compared to **4** Registration of Interest Forms for specific children during 2016-17 and **18** during 2015-16.

The number of potential adopters progressing to assessment in Hampshire, has not only remained strong, therefore, but has continued to increase, in contrast to the national picture where there are significant concerns about numbers decreasing.

**2.13.** The Recruitment Team has identified workers responsible to family find for children waiting for adoptive families and for whom no families can be found in-house, due to the complex needs of the children. The workers liaise with the children's social workers to profile these children on Adoption Link Maker. Workers from the team also attend profile events and activity days with children's social workers. However, Hampshire has been very successful with recruiting in-house adopters who have been able to manage the needs of hard to place children, resulting in a significantly lower number of children being added to Adoption Link Maker compared to the previous year.

**68** out of the **69** children placed with adoptive families were placed with in house adopters during 2017- 2018, with just **1** being placed with interagency adopters, **98.5%**, therefore.

This has included **11** sets of siblings being placed with Hampshire adopters (**10** sibling groups of **2** and **1** sibling group of **3**) and **6** additional households have had full siblings placed of children they had previously adopted. **2** households have been linked with a child with a significant disability.

In comparison, **55** out of the **59** children were placed with in house adopters during 2016-17 and **4** were placed with interagency adopters.

#### **2.14. Adoption Assessment Team**

The Adoption Assessment Team undertakes the training and assessment of prospective adoptive parents and supports adopters through placement until the Adoption Order is made. Workers in the team also undertake step-parent assessments. The team comprises of 7.5 Social Workers, an Assistant Team Manager and a Team Manager.

- 2.15.** Hampshire's adopter approval rates have continued to be strong with **55** households being approved between 1st April 2017 - 31st March 2018, just two less than last year when **57** were approved. Although this continues to be a reduction from the previous two years, it reflects a change in approach to only progress with prospective adopters who have a level of child care experience and skills in place to ensure they are equipped to meet the complex needs of children awaiting adoptive placements.

**17** of the **55** sets of adopters were approved to offer Fostering for Adoption (FfA) placements, widening the choice of early permanence options for children who are subject to Parallel Planning. This number represents a significant improvement on last years total figure of FfA approvals, which was just **4**.

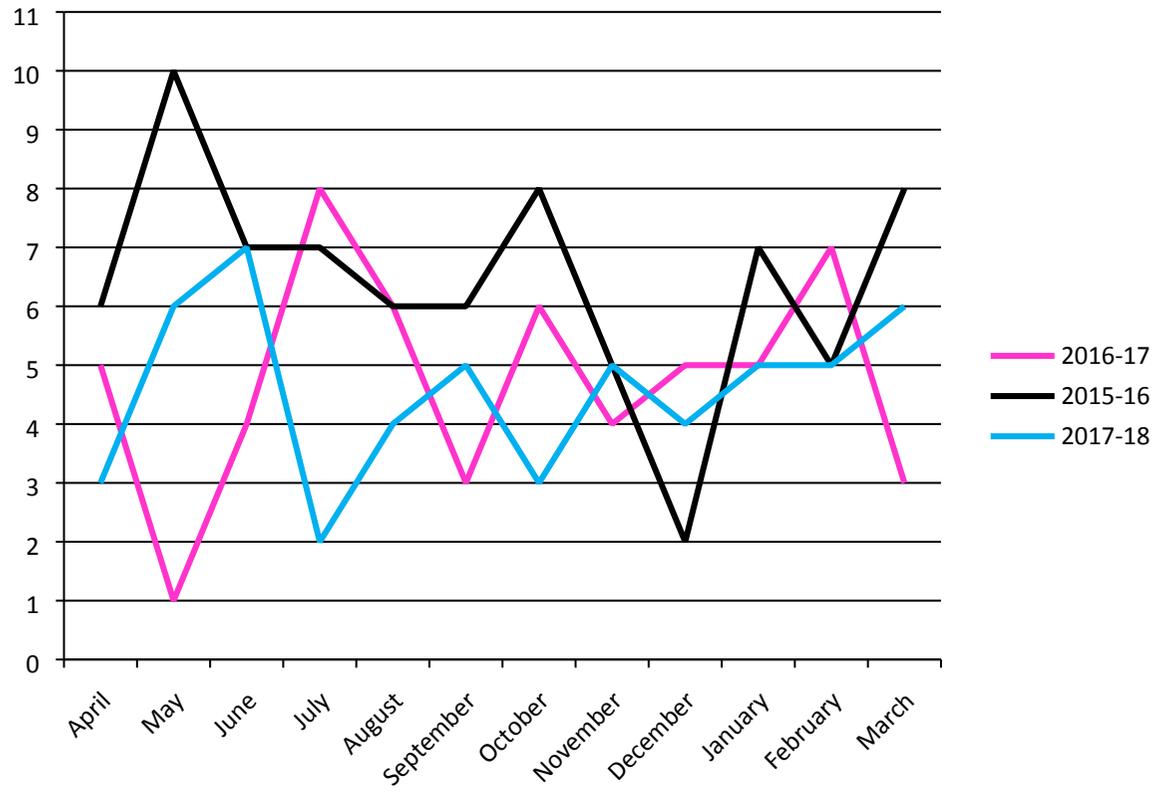
**16** of the **55** sets of adopters were approved to take sibling groups.

Hampshire has had a steady approval rate across all 4 quarters with 16 being approved in Q1; 11 in Q2; 12 in Q3; 16 in Q4.

Comparative figures for 2017-18 show that, with the exception of Kent, Hampshire continued to approve significantly more than any other local authority in the South East Region.

Comparisons with our RAA partners show that Portsmouth approved **11**; Southampton **16** and the Isle of Wight **5**.

### Panel Activity



**April 2015 - March 2016 - Total 76**  
**April 2016 - March 2017 - Total 57**  
**April 2017 - March 2018 - Total 55**

- 2.16. Of the 55 assessments completed during 2017- 18, no households were deferred at panel for further work. Panel did not recommend one set of prospective adopters presented at panel although the Agency Decision Maker did not support this recommendation and considered that they were suitable to adopt.
- 2.17. No cases have been referred to the Independent Review Mechanism (IRM) which provides adoptive applicants in England with the option of applying to an independent body to review the adoption agency's decision.
- 2.18. The average time from adopters registering their interest to commencing their assessment continued to remain well within the government's 5 day timescale and a significant improvement from 2015-16.
- 2.19. The average number of days between enquiry and Stage 1 was **1.71 days** and compares to **1.8 days** last year and an average of 58 days the previous year. 100% of enquiries progressed to Stage 1 within the government's 5 day timescale.
- 2.20. Stage 1 of the adoption assessment should be completed within 2 months. The average timescale for completion of Stage 1 was **1.84 months**. For the first time since the government outlined the 2 Stage process and set their expectations for timeliness, overall average timescales, therefore, have been within government expectations.

This is an improvement on last year's average of **2.03 months**, and a significant improvement on the previous year's average of **4.45 months**.

The reasons for the significant improvements during the past two years are due to putting the following in place;

- The references and checks have been added to the initial application form so all of the information required for checks to be actioned has been received by the service at the time of the initial application.
- When the 2 month timescale has been reached with the majority of checks returned being satisfactory, then a decision has been made to progress to Stage 2 if the GP medical has raised no concerns and no offences have been disclosed by the applicant at the time of processing the DBS check.

This has continued to have an impact within Q1 2017-18, with data showing the average timescales for Stage 1 being completed in **1.9 months**, continuing, therefore, to be within government timescales.

In comparison to our RAA partners, Hampshire's Stage 1 timescales are identical to Portsmouth's, significantly lower than Southampton's (**2.6 months**), and just slightly higher than the Isle Of Wight's (**1.5 months**).

- 2.21.** Stage 2 of the adoption assessment should be completed within 4 months unless there are exceptional circumstances that lead to the agency not being able to make a decision within that time, or the prospective adopter requests that the decision is delayed.

Of the 55 assessments completed, **76%** were completed within this timescale, a continued improvement on last year's figures of **72%**; on the previous year's figures of **68.4%** and the previous year's figures of **67%**.

The average time for completion of Stage 2 was **3.78 months**, compared to **3.9 months** last year and **4.8 months** during 2015-16. This is the second year, therefore, since the government outlined the 2 Stage process and set their expectations for timeliness, overall average timescales have been within government expectations. With the exception of Q4, which averaged just 7 days over the 4 month timescale, all the other quarters were well within government timescales. (Q1- 3.55; Q2- 3.58; Q3- 3.93; Q4- 4.07)

The continued improvements in the timeliness of Stage 2 has demonstrated that decisions around the following has had a positive impact;

- Setting clear expectations for staff around assessment visits and the writing up of assessments
- Setting expectations for the typing up of panel minutes and panel chairs signing off the minutes which previously contributed to some delays in minutes reaching the Agency Decision Maker, impacting on timescales.

Timescales within Q1 for 2017-18 continue to show a downward trend in terms of average timescales for Stage 2 assessments, with data showing the average timescales being completed in **3.4 months**.

In comparison to our RAA partners, Hampshire's Stage 2 timescales are significantly lower than Southampton's (**6.0 months**), Portsmouth's (**4.5 months**), and just slightly higher than the Isle Of Wight's (**3.6 months**).

- 2.22.** Hampshire's timescales for Fast Track assessments have improved over the last year with an overall average for the period 2017-18 of **3.47 months** which is well within the government timescale of 4 months. This compares to 3.1 months last year and 3.9 months in 2015-16. Fast Track assessments relate to those applicants who are 2<sup>nd</sup> time adopters or are foster carers applying to adopt. The statutory guidance allows these applicants to by-pass Stage 1 of the process and enter straight into Stage 2. Timescales for Fast Track assessments should be no longer than 4 months from acceptance of the application to the end of Stage 2.

**8** such assessments took place during 2017-18, compared to **13** during 2016-17.

In comparison to our RAA partners, Hampshire's Fast Track timescales are significantly lower than Southampton's (**5.8 months**), Portsmouth's (**6.4 months**), and just slightly higher than the Isle Of Wight's (**2.5 months**).

The overall adopter assessment journey for Hampshire adopters, with the exception of the Isle Of Wight, was significantly lower than all our other RAA partners. (**6.1 months**, compared to Portsmouth's **7.1 months** and Southampton's (**8.7 months**). The average journey for Isle Of Wight adopters was **5.3 months**, although it is important to note that just 5 adopters were approved during 2017-18.

- 2.23.** At the end of March 2018 there were;

**18** sets of applicants in Stage 1

**25** sets of prospective adopters in Stage 2

**90** sets of prospective adopters being supported post-approval by the team.

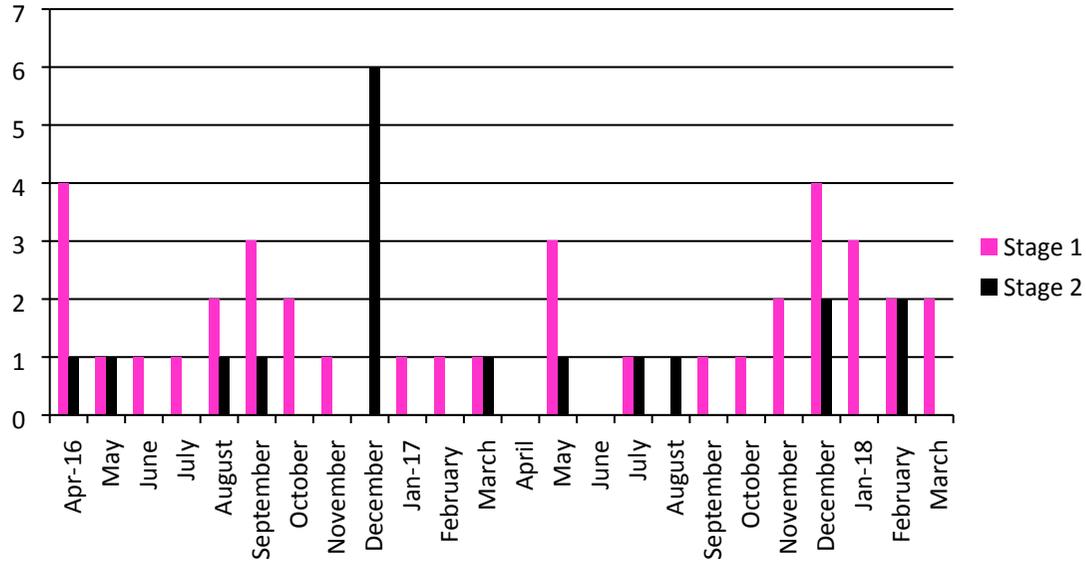
- 2.24.** As at 31<sup>st</sup> March, there were **17** adopters approved and waiting to be matched. This number remained fairly constant throughout the year and demonstrates a consistent level of adopters being approved to replace those matched with children awaiting adoptive placements. It has provided a continued good level of choice for children's social workers when planning for the needs of children on their caseloads and, additionally, has resulted in a high number of adopters profiling themselves nationally via Adoption Link and the National Adoption Register, leading to an increase in out of county placements and generating an income for the Local Authority.

Over the last year, **10** sets of adopters for **11** children were sold, creating an income of **£286,000** for Hampshire.

- 2.25.** **19** sets of prospective adopters withdrew or were counselled out during Stage 1, compared to **21** last year and **17** during 2015-16. **7** withdrew or were counselled out in Stage 2, compared to **11** last year and **9** the previous year.

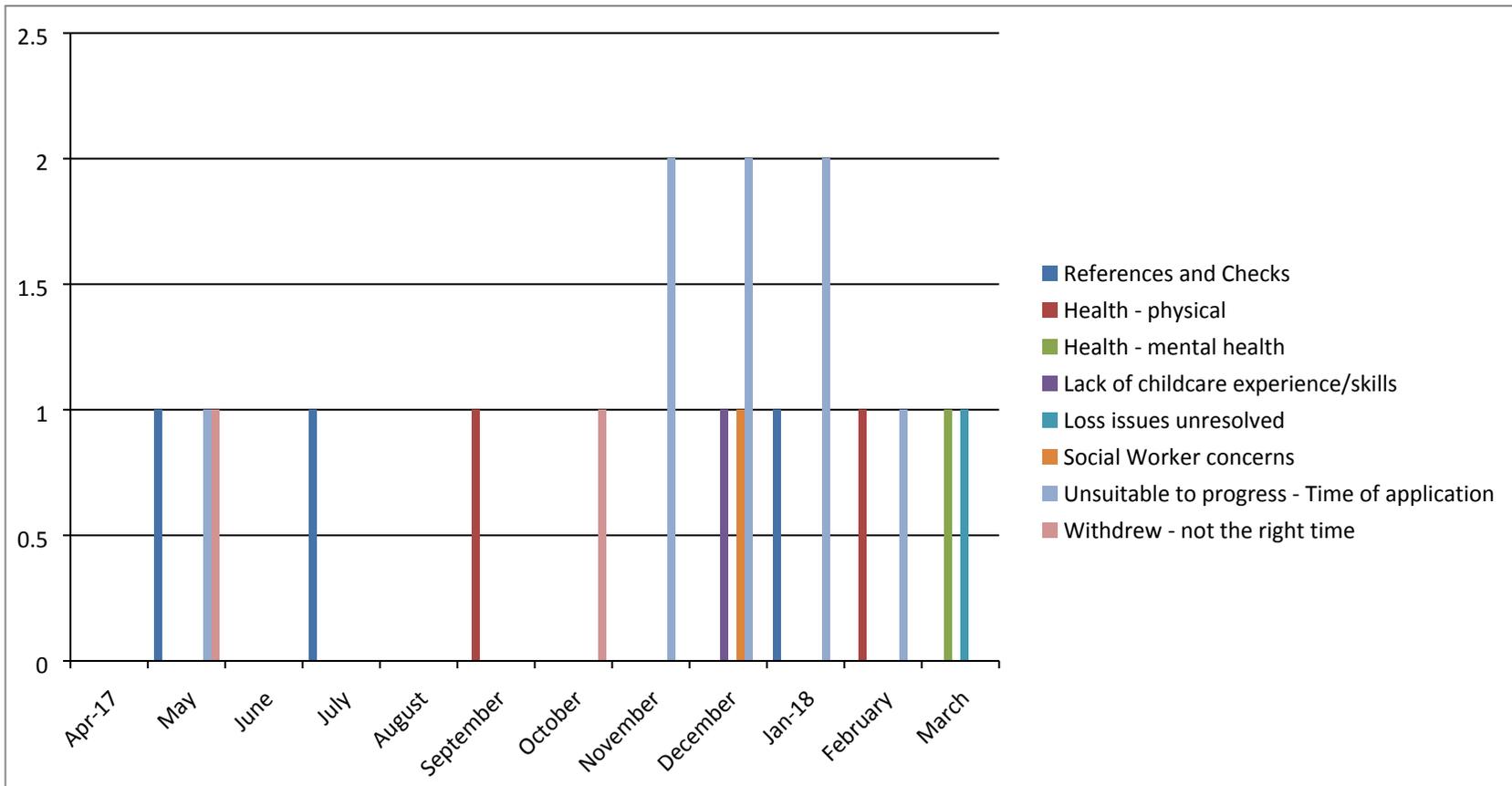
A high number of these withdrew/were counselled out because the time was not right or because they were not ready to progress due to checks/references/training being outstanding, the delays being on part of the applicant. These applicants are likely to return to the process in the near future and these cases will be re-opened when they are able to proceed.

### Numbers counselled out or withdrew during Stage 1 and Stage 2



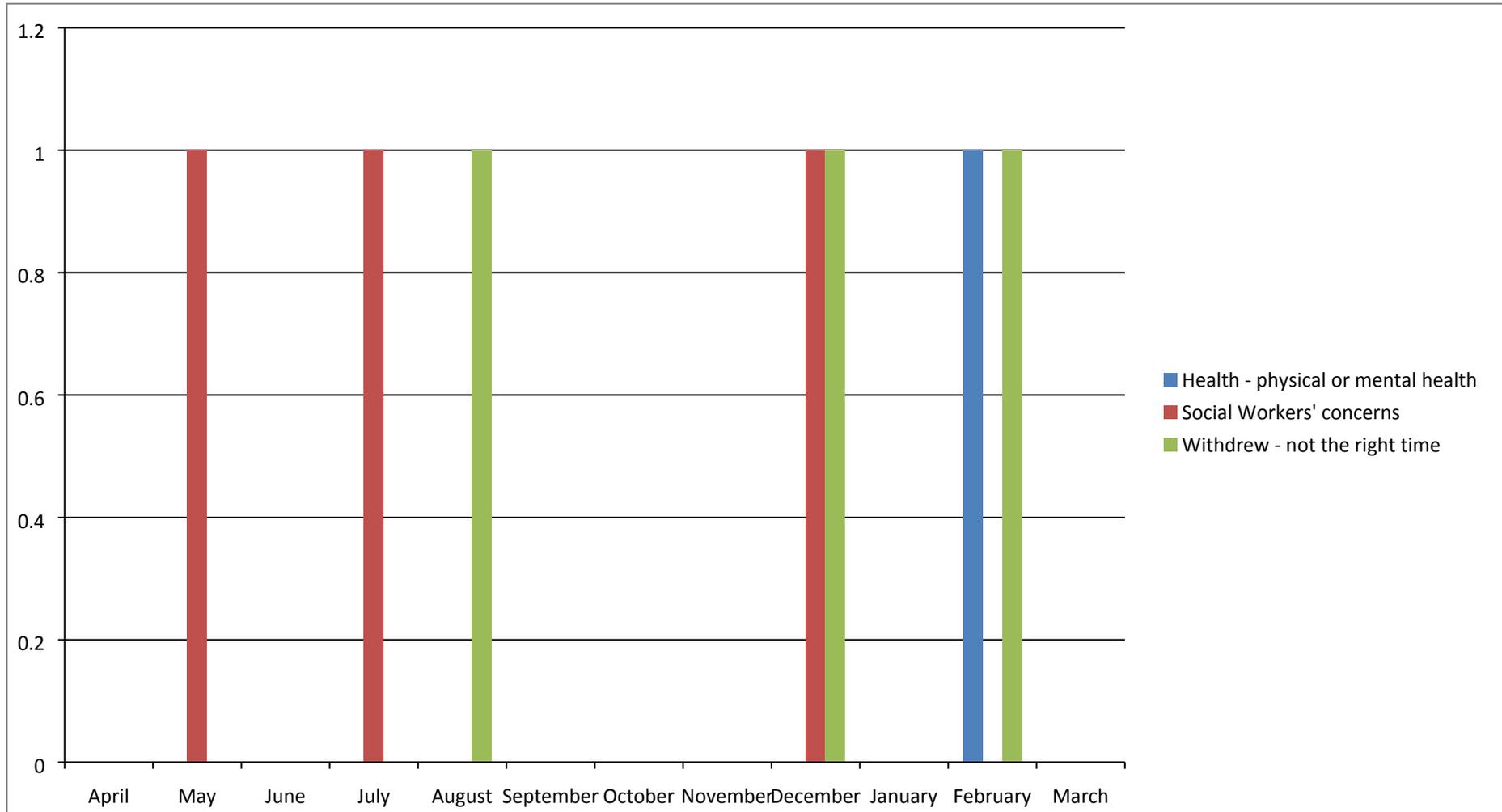
## Reasons counselled out or withdrew during Stage 1 and Stage 2

### Stage 1



Stage 2

Page 40



- 2.26.** The average time for prospective adopters to be matched following approval was **6.33 months**, a slight decrease from **6.7 months** during 2016-17.
- 2.27.** The Assessment Team is also involved in recruitment events and Information Sessions as well as delivering Stage 1 and 2 training for prospective adopters and the Adopting Changes course for approved adopters, working alongside colleagues from other teams within the Adoption Service.
- 2.28.** Pre-approval training was delivered to **126 households** during 2017-18 (72 households attended Stage 1 training and 54 households attended Stage 2). **88** friends and family members attended a workshop for relatives.
- 2.29.** The training and development pathway for adopters from pre-approval through to post adoption is now well established to ensure better preparation and ongoing support for adopters throughout their adoption journey. It includes all adopters undertaking a therapeutic parenting course, 'Adopting Changes'. Also a First Aid course and a Care of Infants course which is led by health care professionals. The pathway was implemented in September 2016 and was reviewed during 2017-18. The review included commissioning Cornerstone, an adopter led voluntary agency, to develop a formal Mentoring Scheme, supporting all adopters from the point they are accepted into assessment. The scheme commenced in February 2018.
- 2.30.** The Fostering for Adoption 1 day workshop has also been reviewed and continues to be part of the preparation training to promote and inform all prospective adopters regarding the concept of Fostering for Adoption. This is run jointly by both the Fostering and Adoption Services.
- 2.31.** The Assessment Team also deal with step parent adoption work. During 2017-18, there were **16** step parent adoption orders made. This compares with **33** step parent adoption orders made during 2016-17, **22** during 2015-16, and **24** during 2014-15.

**2.32.** During 2017-18, **4** non agency adoption assessments were also undertaken by the Adoption Assessment Team. This was just one less than last year when the team undertook **5** such assessments, although an increase from the previous year when just **1** assessment was undertaken.

### **2.33. Children's Adoption Team**

The Children's Adoption Team comprises of 1 Team Manager; 1 Assistant Team Manager; 8.75 Social Workers and 3 Children and Families Support Workers. 2 additional new posts have been agreed and are in the process of being recruited to, alongside agreement for a social worker in the team to act up as a second Assistant Team Manager until March 2019. .

**2.34.** A social worker is allocated to all cases to begin parallel planning, where adoption may be an option being considered as part of childcare planning. On the making of a Placement Order, the adoption social worker becomes the child's case holding social worker and becomes responsible for all of the statutory work for those looked after children. Their work includes family finding, supervised contact between the children and birth family, court work involved in the adoption proceedings, writing later life letters for the children and ensuring that each child has a Life Story book.

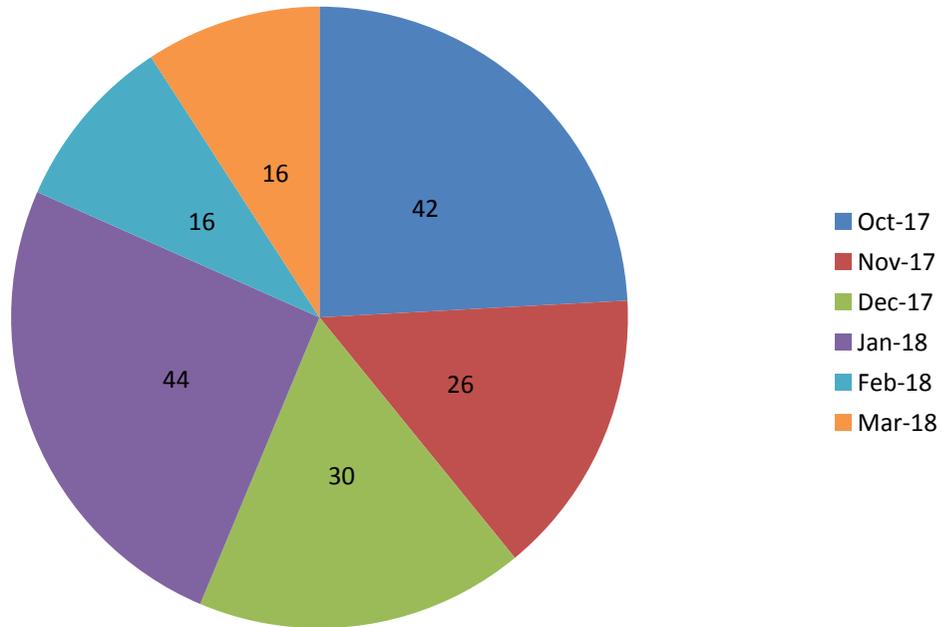
**2.35.** The Children and Families Support Workers assist with direct contact between children and their birth families and also in the preparation of Life Story Books.

**2.36.** Since October 2017, data has been collected regarding the number of referrals for Parallel Planning. **174** cases were referred between October 2017 and March 2018, with **98** cases referred between October and December and **76** cases referred between January and March.

The majority of these have required full Parallel Planning as until multiple assessments have been complete, it has been unclear what permanency plan will be recommended until the date it is due to be considered by the Agency Decision Maker.

**Parallel Planning**

**October 2017- March 2018 – 174 referrals**



### 2.37. Adoption Support Team

The Adoption Support Team currently consists of 8.1 Social Workers, 2 being new additional posts, 3 Children and Families Support Workers, an Assistant Team Manager and a Team Manager.

2.38. The Adoption Support Team has continued to provide a range of support services for adoptive families and children, and birth parents/family. There are currently **312** adoptive families on their data base who receive regular updates about services available, resources and guidance. This reduced figure from last year's **800**, is a result of the new GDPR regulations where by adoptive parents are required to opt in to receive updates.

2.39. Services provided during 2016-17 include;

- A counselling service to adopted adults who were seeking access to records about their adoption and family of origin. **261** adults accessed this service during 2017-18.
- Support/counselling to birth relatives seeking to make contact with a relative who had been adopted.
- Requests for adoption support services and for an Adoption Support Needs Assessment. **277** families (compared to **213** families last year and **193** families the previous year) were open to a social worker with an active adoption support plan during 2017-18 and **110** Adoption Support Needs Assessments were undertaken, compared to **90** the previous year. **286** cases were already open at the beginning of 2017-18 (compared to **123** cases open last year) and reflects the complexities of some cases which have been open to the team for over 12 months.
- Adoption Information Exchange, overseeing contact arrangements between adopted children and their birth families. It facilitated **3500** exchanges during 2017-18 (compared to **3000** last year). **41** direct contacts were supervised by Adoption Support Staff to ensure links with siblings and other birth family members.
- Support of direct contact arrangements.
- **12** support groups for adopters were held across the county both during the day and in the evenings.
- A full-time duty service for information, advice and support.

- **19** consultation sessions for adopters were held across the county in 2017-18 with Adoption Support Social Workers and Children and Family Support Workers. Consultations were extended for professionals working with Special Guardianship Carers, where there were **10** held across the year.
- Links with Cornerstones allowed for Hampshire's adoptive parents to be trained as mentors for other adoptive parents within Hampshire. This partnership working also enabled workshops to be held for adoptive parents on a range of topics.
- Links with Hampshire's Education Psychology department, from whom a number of consultations and Video Interactive Guidance for adoptive families were purchased and offered to adoptive families.
- **2** Extreme Parenting Courses were jointly led with Hampshire's Educational Psychology Service.
- **2** Adopting Changes Parenting Programmes were delivered.
- **6** Theraplay workshops for adopted parents took place.
- **2** Stay and Play sessions were held for adoptive parents and their children.

- 2.40.** The Adoption Support Service had a contract in place with CMB Counselling for the provision of adult work which has included access to records and intermediary service.
- 2.41.** A new contract has been in place with Groundworks Fusion to deliver activities for adopted young people and **25** activities were provided by them during 2017-18, compared to **16** last year.
- 2.42.** Hampshire's Adoption Support Service was one of the adoption agencies involved in the pilot of the Adoption Support Fund (ASF). The ASF was set up by the government in April 2014 with a £19.3 million pot giving local authorities access to pay for therapeutic services to help children recover from their previous experiences. Following the pilot, the fund was made available nationally.
- 2.43.** Hampshire successfully claimed a total of **£385.310** from the ASF for services for adoptive families during 2017-18, compared to **£232.088** during 2016-17, **£141,000** during 2015-16 and **£137,000** during 2014-15.
- 2.44.** The services included the therapeutic parenting courses, therapy for adoptive families and specialist sensory processing assessments. The Extreme Parenting course and Adopting Changes have been funded in its entirety by the Adoption Support Fund and there has been a high demand for places on these courses. During 2017-18, Hampshire claimed a further **£40,800** for the Trauma course and

Adoption Changes and a further **£43,150** for the EP consultations and VIG. This not only covered the cost but enabled an increase of the number of programmes that are delivered.

**2.45.** During 2017-18, The Adoption Support Team developed a programme with a therapist, Tory Barrow, who has received training in both Non Violent Resistance and Bryan Post’s work The Great Behaviour Breakdown. The aim was to deliver a bespoke package that addresses the issue of Child On Parent Violence. A programme called “Knowing Me, Knowing You was delivered, with an additional cohort planned for 2018 -19. As well as being a therapist, Tory is an adoptive parent herself. To maximise learning from the pilot, the cohort was selected, and targeted primary aged children where this is an emerging pattern. The objective is to reduce the behaviours as early as possible to avoid it being carried into teenage years and secondary school. Tory has also been commissioned to provide a workshop to the service, to ensure the team are able to support the intervention.

**2.46. Inter Country Adoptions**

All inter country adoption assessments continue to be carried out within a Service Level Agreement with the Intercountry Adoption Centre (IAC) which has been in place from September 2016. Hampshire continues to have a statutory responsibility to undertake the welfare supervision of those children whose adoption orders made in their country of origin are not recognised in the UK and who, therefore, need to go through the adoption process in the UK.

**2.47.** There are currently no children from overseas placed with approved adopters in Hampshire who require such welfare supervision until Adoption Orders are granted in the UK.

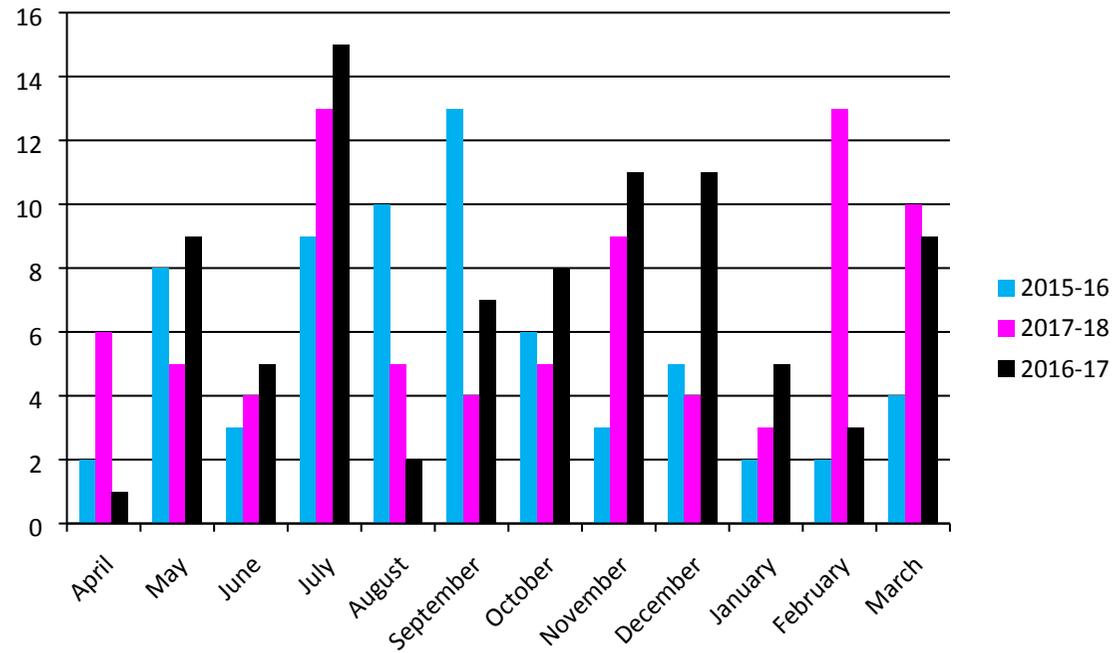
**2.48. Children with Plans for Adoption; Placed for Adoption and Prospective Adopters Approved from 1<sup>st</sup> April to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014-15, 2015-16, 2016-17 and 2017-18. |**

<b>1<sup>st</sup> April to 31<sup>st</sup> March</b>				
	<b>2014-15</b>	<b>2015-16</b>	<b>2016-17</b>	<b>2017-18</b>
Children’s Plans for Adoption	78	67	86	81

Plans for Adoption Rescinded	28	15	13	15
Children Linked/Placed	97	82	59	69
Adoption Orders Made	86	84	70	55
Disruptions (pre-Adoption Order)	4	5	0	1
Approved adopters	73	76	57	55
Placement Orders		63	78	59

**2.49.** There were **81** children's plans referred to the Agency Decision Maker (ADM) or Adoption Panel (where the child is relinquished) during 2017-18, with 15 in Q1; 22 in Q2; 18 in Q3 and 26 in Q4.

This compares to **86** during 2016-17, **67** during 2015-16 and **78** during 2014-15.



**April 2015 - March 2016 - Total 67**  
**April 2016 - March 2017 - Total 86**  
**April 2017- March 2018 - Total 81**

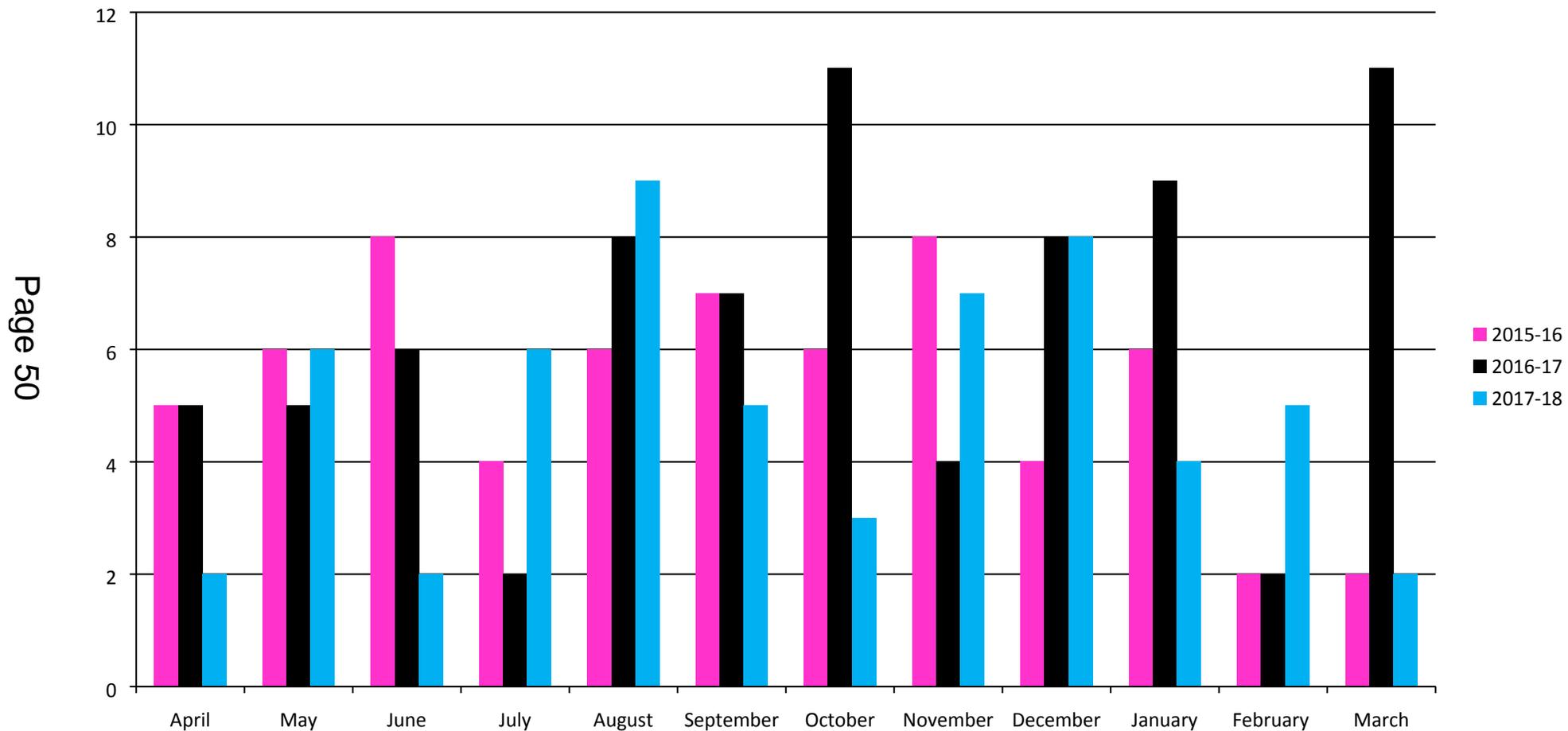
2.50. Between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017- 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018, there were **15** children who had their plan for adoption rescinded, compared to **13** children during 2015-16 and **15** children during 2015-2016.

Of the **15** children who had their plans rescinded, the reasons were as follows;

- **7** children did not have a Placement Order made after ADM due to the plan changing during proceedings and the children being placed with family members.
- **1** child had an adoption disruption and was placed with foster carers who have offered him permanency through long term foster care.
- **2** were adopted by their Great Aunt and Uncle who live in America.
- **5** children had their plans changed to long-term foster care due to adopters not being found. 4 of these were aged over 5 and 1, who was part of a sibling group, was 4.5 years. 1 remained with his current foster carers and 2 children (siblings) were able to go and live with their grandparents who were assessed as Connected Carers. Long-term foster carers were successfully found for the remaining 2 children (siblings).

**2.51.** Between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018, **59** Placement Orders were made in Hampshire, compared to **78** in 2016-2017 and **63** in 2015-2016. Q2 saw the highest number (20) with 10 in Q1, 18 in Q3 and 11 in Q4.

### Number of Placement Orders



Page 50

**2.52.** At the end of March 2018, there were **36** children awaiting adoption with a Placement Order, compared to **55** children last year, **36** the previous year and **46** the previous year. **12** of these children had families identified and **13** matches were being explored. The remaining **11** children we were externally family finding for and included 4 sibling groups of 2 children and 3 individual children with complex medical needs.

**2.53.** Of the 26 children waiting with a Placement Order, their characteristics were as follows;

- None were aged over 5 when entering care (0%) and compares to 4% last year.
- 21 were male (58%) and compares to 61% last year.
- 15 were part of a sibling group (57.7%) and compares to 63% last year.
- 0 were of Black and Minority Ethnic origin (0%) and compares to 0% last year.
- 2 had a disability (7.7%) and compares to 4% last year.

**2.54.** As at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018, there were;

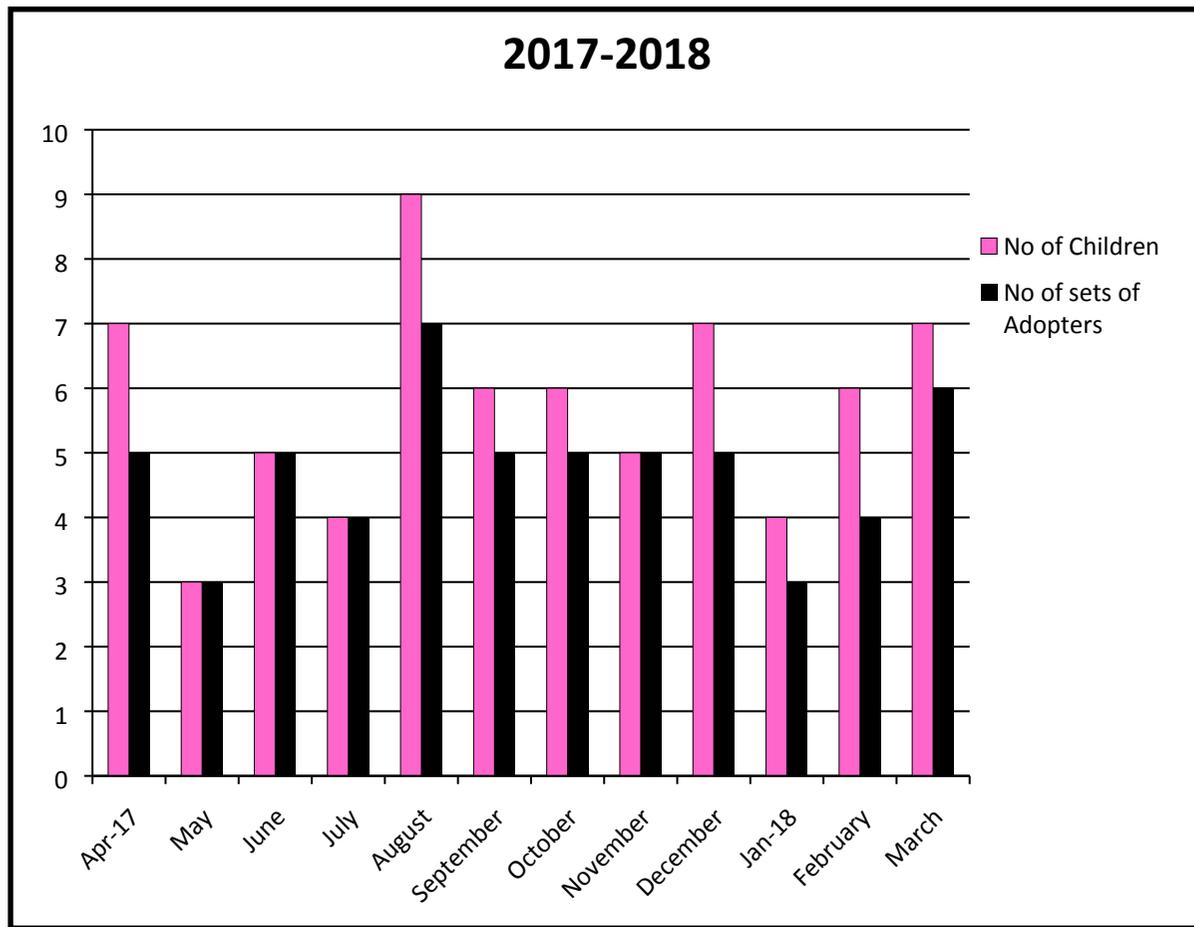
- 5 children over 5 years old (13.8%) who were waiting with a Placement Order. This compares to 8 (out of 55) last year, 14.5%, and 8 children (out of 36) the previous year, 22%. Of these 5 children, 2 are now placed with family members and we are in the process of revoking their Placement Orders; 1 we have commissioned a specialist assessment, the outcome will guide us regarding if adoption continues to be the right plan; 2 we will be changing their plans to long-term fostering.
- 15 children waiting with a Placement Order who were part of a sibling group (57.7%), a lower number than last year when there were 32 children (out of 55), 58.2%, and the previous year where there were 18 children (out of 36), 50%. 7 have now been placed for adoption; 4 we will be changing their plans to long-term fostering, 2 of these will remain with their present foster carer. We are continuing to family find nationally for the remaining 4 children, 2 sibling groups of 2.
- 21 children waiting with a Placement Order aged under 5 and who were not part of a sibling group (81%). This compares to 23 (out of 55), 41.8%, last year and 16 (out of 36) the previous year (44.4%). 18 have either now been placed for adoption or we have possible matches for. 3 we are continuing to family find for due to their complex needs.

**2.55.** The number of children linked with prospective adopters has continued to be high during 2017-18 and a total of **69** children were linked with **57** adopters. This is more than last year when a total of **59** children were linked with **51** adopters. Although less than the previous

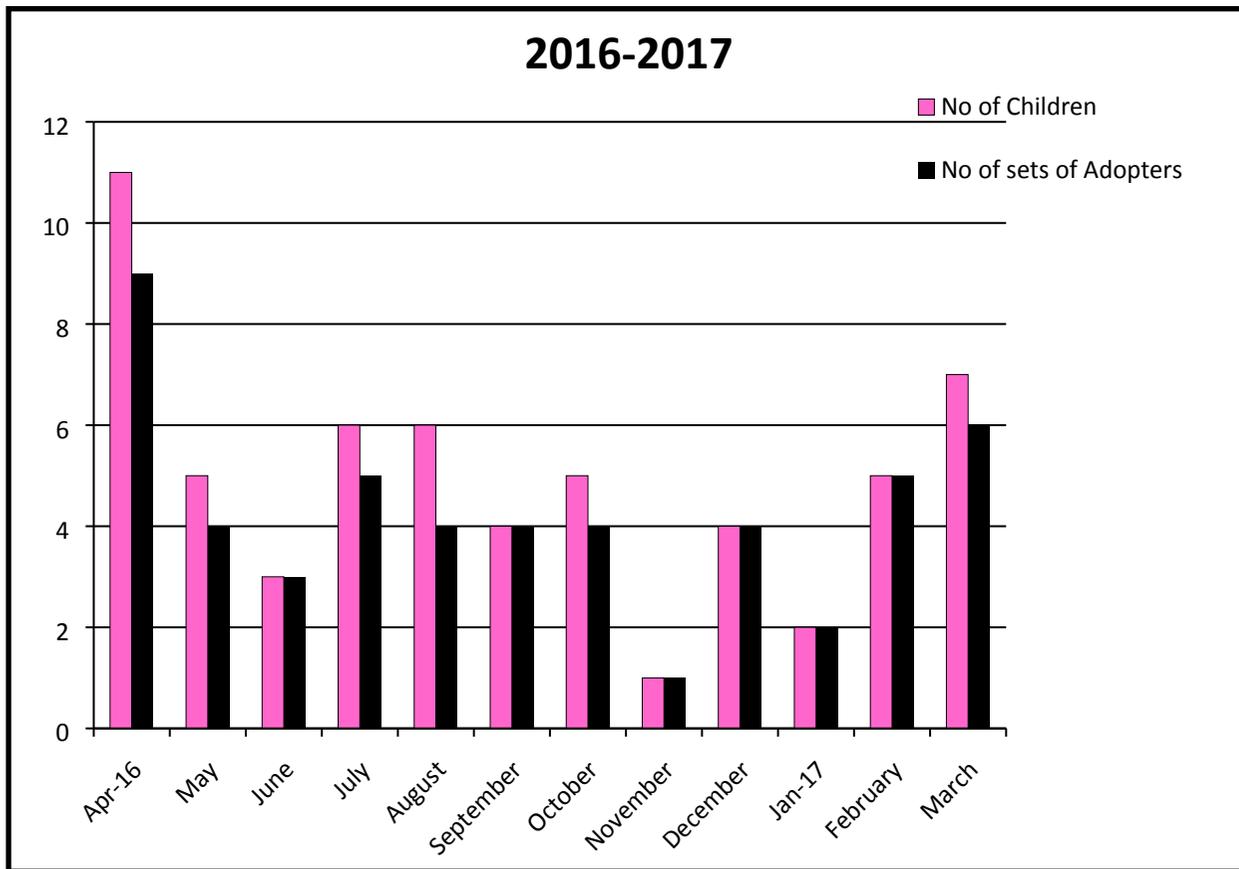
year when a total of **82** children were linked with **72** adopters, it reflects the high number of Children's Plans and Placement Orders last year.

**Number of Children Linked/Placed.**

**April 2017- March 2018**

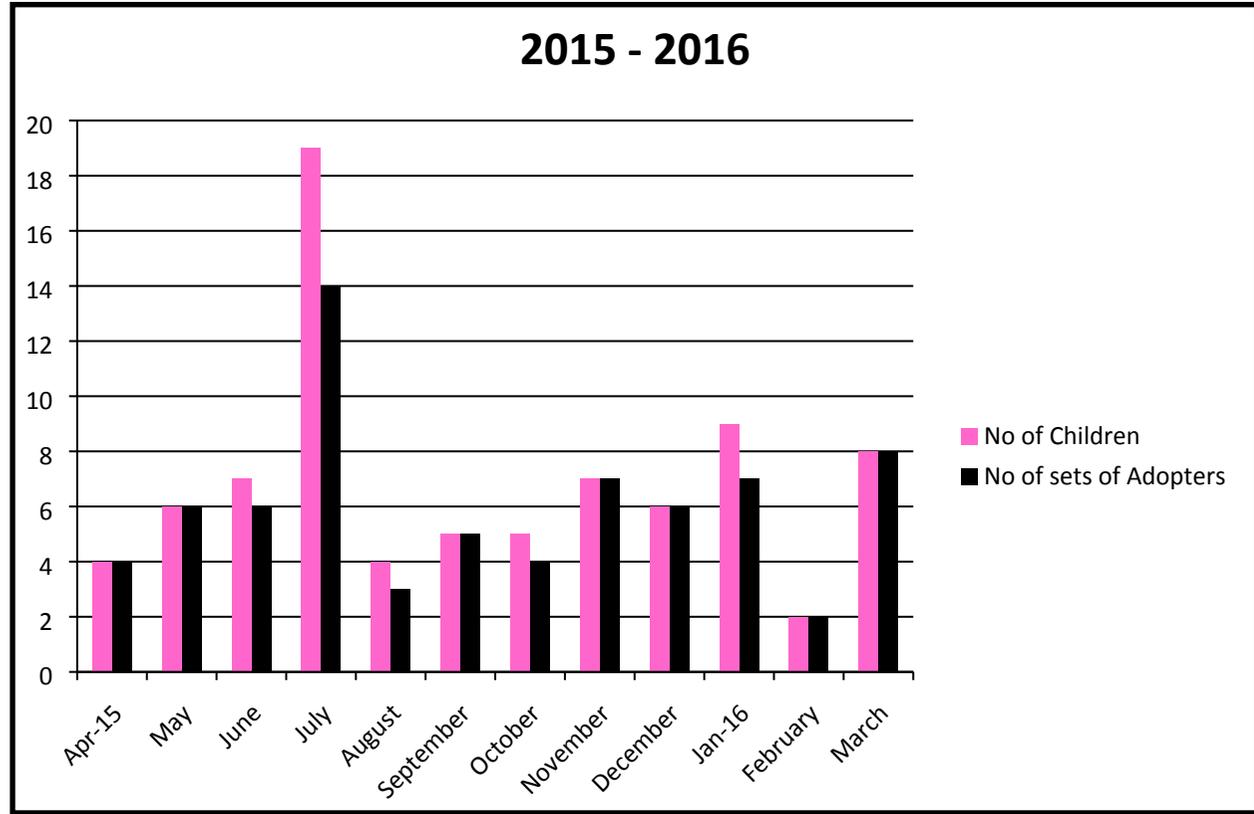


April 2016- March 2017



April 2015- March 2016

### 2015 - 2016



- 2.56.** A significant issue during 2014-15 was the numbers of Hampshire children matched with adopters from other agencies. Although the numbers of adopters approved with Hampshire increased significantly from the previous year, many of those adopters still did not match the needs of the children waiting, resulting in approximately **40%** of Hampshire children being placed in inter-agency adoptive placements.

The review of the recruitment strategy during 2016, led to an increase of children being placed with in- house adopters during 2015-16 with **15** children being placed with adopters from other agencies (**18.3%**), compared to 35 children matched with other agencies during 2014-15 (**37%**).

With the new recruitment strategy fully in place during 2016-17 with the drive to pull in adopters who had the child care experience and skills to meet the needs of the children waiting, the percentage of children placed with in- house adopters significantly increased with just **4** children being placed with adopters from other agencies (**6.8%**). Of those 4, all met the 'hard to place' criteria for reimbursement by the DfE .

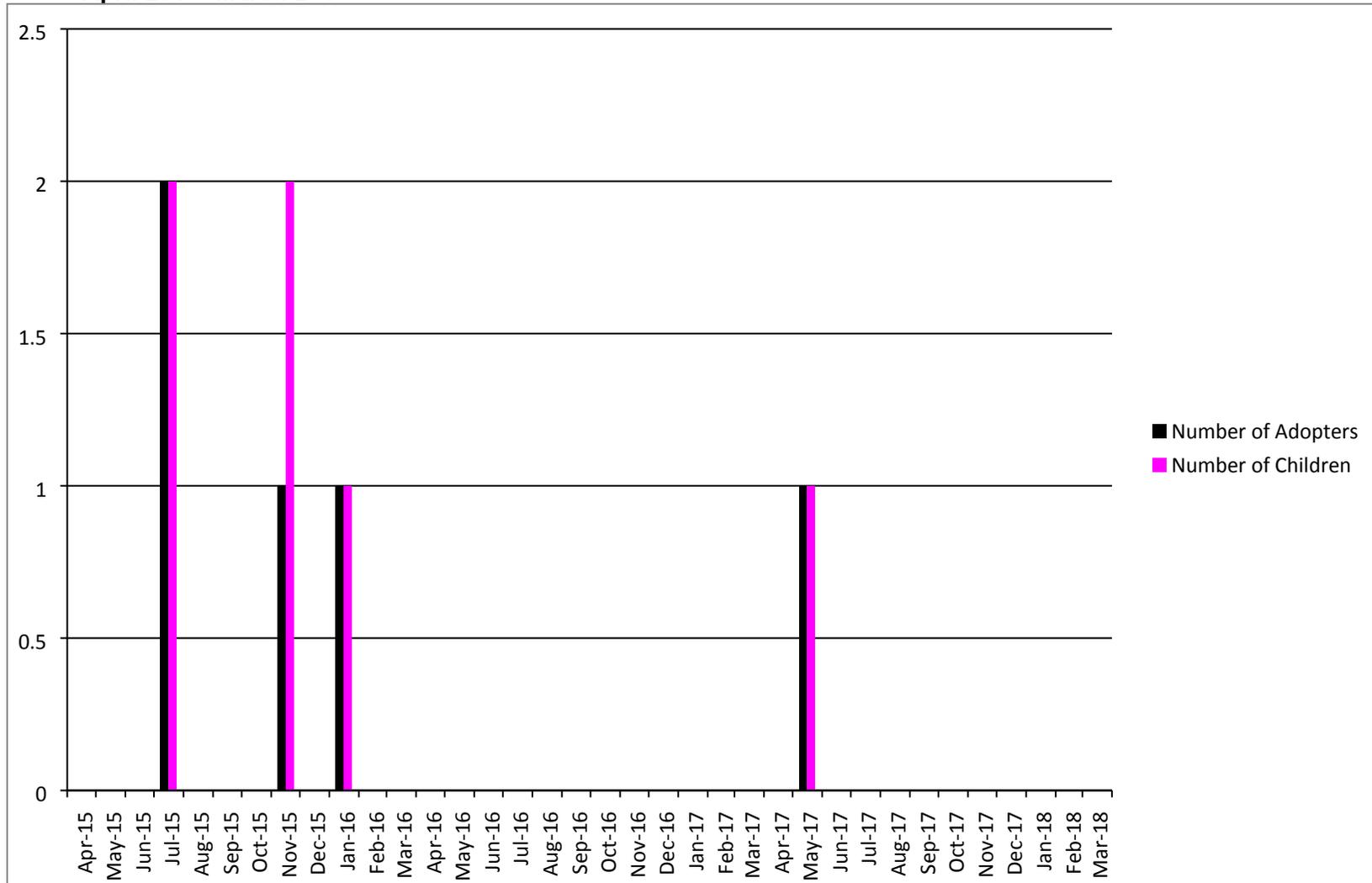
2017-18 has continued to see the successful recruitment of adopters and the drive has been to recruit adopters who have the skills and experience to adopt sibling groups and children with disabilities. As a consequence, just **1** child, out of the **69** linked, was placed with adopters from another agency, with the remaining **68** being placed in house.

To ensure we have sufficient adopters for an increasing number of sibling groups who are very likely to be granted Placement Orders by the Courts in the next few months, we have commenced a pilot and set up a Stage 1 Assessment Team. This Team will work with adopters during Stage 1, help them build their child care experience and ensure all potential adopters are fully supported, trained and equipped to take a sibling group, should they have potential. In addition to Cornerstones being commissioned to provide a Mentoring Scheme to support adopters, Hampshire has agreed to be part of their pilot to use Virtual Reality film clips in training and 1:1 sessions, to prepare Hampshire adopters as fully as possible to meet the needs of children requiring adoption.

The Team's focus will also be to build on the high numbers of adopters being approved and to sell a number to other local authorities, with the aim of providing an income.

- 2.57.** Appendix B gives details of the child linked and placed with adopters approved with another agency during 2017-18.
- 2.58.** There was **1** disruption during 2017-18 which compares to **0** disruptions during 2016-17 and **5** disruptions during 2015-16.

**Number of Disruptions (Pre-Order)  
April 2015- March 2018**



**2.59.** **55** children were adopted between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018, which is 15 less than the **70** adopted last year and 29 less than the **84** adopted the previous year. The lower number correlates with the lower number of children linked with adopters last year.

Out of the 55;

**49** were under 5;

**27** were male;

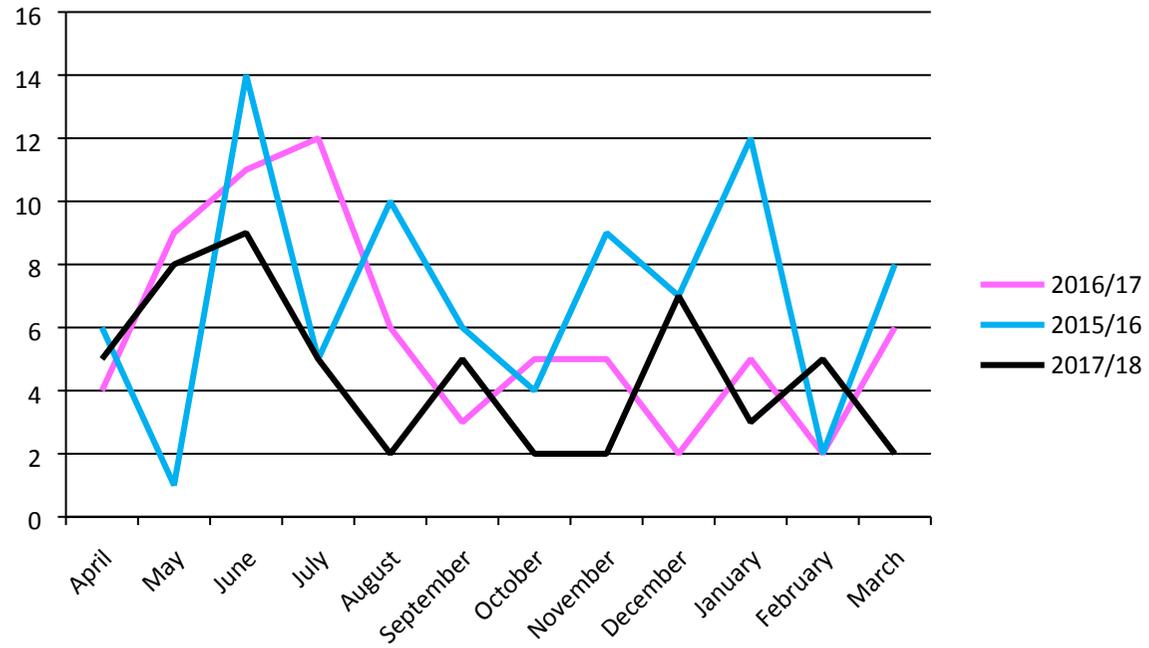
**13** were part of a sibling group; (5 sibling groups of 2; 1 sibling group of 3)

**3** had a disability;

**3** were from a minority group.

### Adoption Orders

April 2015 - March 2016 - Total 84  
April 2016 - March 2017 - Total 70  
April 2017 - March 2018 - Total 55



## Summary

- 2.60.** Of the 55 children adopted during the year, 5 were adopted by their foster carers compared to 13 last year.
- 2.61.** Of the 55 children adopted during the year, 5.4% (3 children) were from minority ethnic backgrounds. This compares to 12.9% for 2016-17 when 9 out of the 70 children adopted were from ethnic minority backgrounds; 4.8% for 2015-16 when 4 out of the 84 children were adopted from minority ethnic backgrounds and 8.1% for 2014-15 when 7 out of the 86 children adopted were from minority ethnic backgrounds.
- 2.62.** Of the 55 children adopted during the year, 10.9% (6 children) were aged 5 years or over. This compares to 35.8% for 2017-18 when 25 of the 70 children adopted were aged 5 or over; 27.4% for 2015-16 when 23 of the 84 children adopted were aged 5 or over and 22.1% for 2014-15 when 19 of the 86 children adopted were aged 5 years or over.
- 2.63.** During 2017-18, 11% of looked after children ceased to be adopted (55 out of 496 children). This compares to 13.5% (70 out of 519) last year.
- 2.64.** During 2017-18, the total spend on inter-agency placements was just **£29,501,85**, compared to **£170,333** last year; **£504,751** during 2015-16 and **£816,000** during 2014-15. This included final payments for children placed in the previous year. Adopters for just 1 child were bought externally this year.
- 2.65.** During the last year, 10 sets of adopters were matched to 11 children from other local authorities providing an income of **£286,000**. This compares to 5 sets of adopters being sold last year who were matched to 7 children; 7 during 2015-16; and 4 during 2014-15 providing an income of **£167,000**, **£191,000** and **£81,000** respectively.

2.66. Breakdown of profile of children with new plans for adoption

<i>Breakdown of profile of children with new plans for adoption</i>	<i>April 2015 – March 2016</i>	<i>April 2016 – March 2017</i>	<i>April 2017- March 2018</i>
Single male children:	31	29	27
Single female children:	25	19	31
Sibling pairs:	7 pairs (14 children)	12 pairs (24 children)	10 pairs (20 children)
Sibling group of 3:	0	6 pairs (18 children)	1 (3 children)
Total number of children:	70 children	90 children	81 children

2.67. Ethnicity of children with new plans for adoption

Ethnicity of Children with new Plans for Adoption (Total Number of Children: )	April 2015 – March 2016	April 2016 – March 2017	April 2017 – March 2018
White British (WBRI)	63	87	73
Mixed: White & Black African (MWBA)	2	0	0
Mixed: White & Black Caribbean (MWBC)	1	0	2
Mixed: White & Asian (MWAS)	2	1	1
White Other (WOTH)	1	1	3
Mixed: Other (MOTH)	0	1	1
Black Other (BOTH)	0	0	0
Black African (BAFR)	1	0	0
Chinese (CHNE)	0	0	1
Other Ethnic Group (OOTH)	0	0	0
Not known (refused/unable to provide): REFU/NOBT	0	0	0
<b>Total number of children:</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>81</b>

2.68. Of the 81 children who had new plans for adoption agreed, 1 was relinquished for adoption, which is the same as last year and the year before.

2.69. Ages of children with new plans for adoption at time of agency decision

**April 2015 - March 2016**

0-6 months	7-12 months	1-2 yrs	2-3 yrs	3-5 yrs	5+ yrs	TOTAL
26	11	7	10	10	3	67

**April 2016 - March 2017**

0-6 months	7-12 months	1-2 yrs	2-3 yrs	3-5 yrs	5+ yrs	TOTAL
25	5	13	16	23	4	86

**April 2017 - March 2018**

0-6 months	7-12 months	1-2 yrs	2-3 yrs	3-5 yrs	5+ yrs	TOTAL
38	11	11	14	7	0	81

## 2.70. Adoption Scorecards

2.71. Adoption Scorecards were introduced by the government as part of an approach to tackle delays in the adoption system. The scorecard allows local authorities and other agencies to monitor their performance and compare it with others.

## 2.72. Scorecard 1 – Average time between the child entering care and moving in with their adoptive family.

For the 55 children who were adopted between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018, the average time in days between entering care and moving in with their adoptive family was **419 days**. This is a reduction of 71 days on 2016-17 when the average time was **490 days**; a reduction of 146 days on 2015-16 when the average time was **565 days** and a reduction of 133 days on 2014-15, when the average time was **552 days**.

This year has seen, therefore, a continued significant improvement and for the first time since the commencement of scorecards, is within the government's threshold of 426 days.

Comparative figures show that our timescales are lower than the national average, which is **457 days**. In comparison to our RAA partners, Hampshire's timescales are significantly lower than Southampton's (**544 days**), just 6 days more than Portsmouth's who averaged **413 days** and 82 days higher than the Isle Of Wight, who averaged **337 days**. It must be noted, however, that Portsmouth and the Isle Of Wight had much lower numbers adopted, 30 and 13 children respectively.

The following measures were put in place in April 2016 to address timescales and the impact is now evident;

- A new recruitment strategy was put in place, the drive being to pull in adopters who have the child care skills and experience to meet the needs of the children waiting.
- Clear expectations and timescales around matching processes were set.
- Reviewing plans for children over the age of 5 and those with disabilities in a much more timely manner and whether adoption is the appropriate plan.
- The structural changes for the East and West Adoption Teams to become one County Team were progressed and have resulted in consistency of processes.

**2.73. Scorecard 2 – Average time between the Local Authority receiving court authority and the Local Authority identifying a match**

For the 55 children who were adopted between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017, the average time between Placement Order and the Local Authority identifying a match was **175 days**. Although slightly outside of the government's revised threshold of 121 days, it is a significant improvement on last year when the average was **217 days** and on the previous year when the average was **312 days**.

Again through improved targeted recruitment, setting expectations and timescales around matching processes and meeting fortnightly as a service to track timescales, timescales have improved significantly from previous years. We are now in a position where we have a pool of adopters available for social workers to consider when seeking an adoptive family.

Comparative figures show that our timescales are lower than the national average, which is **190 days**. In comparison to our RAA partners, Hampshire's timescales are significantly lower than Southampton's (**259 days**) and Portsmouth's (**247 days**), although higher than the Isle Of Wight who averaged **95 days**. Again it must be noted, however, that the Isle Of Wight had just 13 children adopted during 2017-18.

**2.74. Scorecard 3 – % of children who wait less than 14 months (previously 16 months) between entering care and moving in with an adoptive family.**

During 2017-18, **72.2%** waited less than 14 months between entering care and moving in with an adoptive family. This again is a significant improvement on last year when **62.7%** (41 out of 70) were placed within **16 months**. (It is important to note that this indicator is now **14 months**.)

Comparative figures to our RAA partners show that our percentage of children placed in 14 months are significantly higher than Southampton's (**53.3%**) although slightly lower than Portsmouth's (**83.3%**) and the Isle Of Wight's (**87.5%**).

**2.75. The adoption journeys and the timescales of children within Hampshire are tracked and discussed at fortnightly Adoption Tracking Meetings attended by all the Team Managers within the Adoption Service and chaired by the Adoption Service Manager.**

**2.76. Adoption Panel and Advisory Service**

- 2.77.** Hampshire Adoption Agency provides an advisory service which oversees the recruitment, training, management and administration of the Central List of Adoption Panel Members for Hampshire's adoption panels. An appointed Panel Coordinator oversees this service.
- 2.78.** Hampshire had 3 Adoption Panels each month during the period 1st April 2017 to 31st March 2018, a reduction from 4 Monthly Panels in previous years. The Panels meet monthly at various locations throughout the County. Each Panel generally meets for half a day with an agenda containing up to 4 cases.
- 2.79.** Between 1st April 2017 and 31st March 2018, the Panels met on 36 occasions. **117** cases were presented to the Panels during the year; **59** approvals as suitable to adopt; **57** linkings of **69** children with prospective adopters; **1** relinquished Child's Plan.
- 2.80.** Hampshire currently has 21 voting Panel Members on its Central List of Adoption Panel Members, including elected members who continue to support the work of the Adoption Agency. Additionally, there are 3 Agency Advisers, who provide procedural guidance to Panels.
- 2.81.** Panel Members attended a Training and Development Day on 12 January 2018. Further training events are planned during 2018-19.
- 2.82.** Adoption Panels are required to provide feedback to the agency on the quality of the reports presented to the Panel. This includes whether the requirements of the Restrictions on the Preparation of Adoption Reports Regulations 2005 have been met (that children's and adopter's reports are only completed by registered and experienced social workers or student social workers who are supervised by registered and experienced social workers) and whether there is a thorough, rigorous, consistent and fair approach across the service in the assessment of whether a child should be placed for adoption, the suitability of prospective adopters and the proposed placement.

- 2.83.** 36 Adoption Panels are planned for 2018-19. Additional Panels are organised if there is case demand. There is considerable progress towards 'paperless' Panels, which will significantly improve efficiencies, including reducing administration time and reducing costs and volumes of paper in circulation.

### **3. Regional Adoption Agencies**

The Government has continued to progress its proposals to move to Regional Adoption Agencies. The aim is to improve adopter recruitment and adoption support, speed up matching and reduce costs.

- 3.1.** Hampshire's partners in the Regional Adoption Agency (Adopt South) are Portsmouth, Southampton, the Isle of Wight Local Authorities and three Voluntary Adoption Agencies, Barnardos, Adoption UK and Parents and Children Together (PACT).

- 3.2.** Plans are progressing to establish Adopt South with the aim for it to commence in April 2019.

### **4. Summary and Work Plan for 2018-19**

**Strengths during 2017-18 include;**

- **Targeted recruitment which has pulled in adopters with skills and experience.** (588 enquiries; 189 households attended an Adoption Information Session (AIS); 125 pre-stage visits; conversion rate from AIS to forwarding to assessment, 46.6% compared to 36.3% last year)
- **Number of potential adopters progressing to assessment has not only remained strong but has increased, in contrast to the national picture.** (88 forwarded to assessment, compared to 77 last year.)
- **Numbers of adopters approved has remained strong.** (55 approved, including 16 approved to take a sibling group)

- **Number of adopters approved to take FfA placements, widening the choice of early permanence options.** (17, compared to 4 last year.) .
- **Numbers of children linked with prospective adopters and the success of placing in-house.**(68 out of the 69 children have been placed in house, 98.5%. 69 foster placements have, therefore, been freed up for other looked after children).
- **Numbers of ‘hard to place’ children successfully placed in-house.** (This has included 11 sets of siblings being placed with Hampshire adopters and 6 additional households having full siblings placed of children they had previously adopted. 2 households were linked with a child with a significant disability.)
- **Pool of adopters approved and waiting to be matched.** (The number has remained consistent at around 17 throughout the year.)
- **The improved timeliness of Stage 1 assessments.** (The average timescale was 1.84 months and, for the first time since the government outlined the 2 Stage process, has been within the government’s 2 month expectation).
- **Timeliness of Stage 2 assessments.** (The average timescale was 3.78 months and, for the second year, has been within the government’s 4 month expectation).
- **Timeliness of Fast Tracked assessments.** (The average timescale was 3.47 months and well within, therefore, the government’s 4 month expectation).
- **Timeliness of the overall adopter assessment journey.** (With the exception of the Isle Of Wight, Hampshire’s overall adopter assessment journey was significantly lower than all our other RAA partners. (**6.1 months**, compared to Portsmouth’s **7.1 months** and Southampton’s **8.7 months**).

- **The improved timeliness of children entering care and moving in with their adoptive family (Scorecard 1), which for the first time since the commencement of scorecards, has been within the government's threshold of 426 days.** (419 days, compared to 490 days last year; 565 days during 2015-16 and 552 during 2014 -15).
- **The improved timeliness between the Local Authority receiving court authority and the Local Authority identifying a match (Scorecard 2).** (Although slightly outside of the government's revised threshold of 121 days, this years average of 175 days is a significant improvement on last year when the average was 217 days and on the previous year when the average was 312 days).
- **The improved number of children waiting less than 14 months between entering care and moving in with an adoptive family (Scorecard 3).** (72.2% waited less than 14 months between entering care and moving in with an adoptive family, compared to 62.7% who were placed within 16 months last year.)
- **Numbers of children adopted.** (55 adopted)
- **The very low number of disruptions.** (Just 1 out of the 69 children placed).
- **The range and number of services provided by the Adoption Support Team.** (This has included the design and delivery of a bespoke programme to address the issue of 'Child On Parent Violence' in partnership with a therapist/adoptive parent).
- **The amount successful claimed from the Adoption Support Fund.** (£385.310, compared to £232,088 during 2017-18).
- **The income provided to the Local Authority through selling adopters.** (10 sets of adopters sold for 11 children, generating an income of £286,000, compared to an income of £167,000 last year; £191,000 the previous year and £81,000 the previous year).
- **The low spend on inter-agency placements.** (£29,501,85 was spent this year, compared to £170,333 last year; £504,751 during 2015-16 and £816,000 during 2014-15).

- **A review of the learning and development pathway for adopters from pre-approval through to post adoption to ensure better preparation and ongoing support of adopters throughout their adoption journey.** (This has included commissioning Cornerstones to provide a Mentoring Scheme. Cornerstones have reported very positive feedback from adopters interviewed regarding Hampshire's Adoption Service).
- **A new policy has been approved for Foster Carers who wish to adopt children in their care.**
- **Improved User Participation.** (Adopters are now involved at all Recruitment Events; Adoption Information Sessions; co-lead Stage 1 Training; Cornerstones Mentoring Scheme is in place, led by Hampshire's adopters; Adopter Voice has held regular forums to hear the views of adopters across the region and to inform the development of the Regional Adoption Agency).

#### **Work Plan for 2018-19**

- **To progress the pilot of the Stage 1 Assessment Team to increase the numbers being improved; build potential to take sibling groups and sell an increased number of adopters to other local authorities to provide an income.**
- **To continue to monitor Stage 1 and Stage 2 assessment timescales to ensure that the improvements are maintained.**
- **To continue to monitor Scorecards.**

- **To continue to develop adoption support services and make full use of the Adoption Support Fund.** (A revised list of the full range of local adoption services, including specialisms they offer, to be available to meet assessed need).
- **To continue to progress the expectation set around timescales set for Adoption Support Needs Assessments (allocation - 5 days and completion - 45 days), leading to improved support to Adopters.** A plan is in place which includes two additional social workers joining the team, to meet the target timescales set.
- **To continue with the plans put in place to improve the timeliness of completing Life -Story Books and Later Life Letters.** To embed this in practice, with drafts being commenced prior to an Adoption Order being made, leading to these being available to children/adopters within 10 days of the Court Celebration Hearing following an Adoption Order being granted.
- **To write a research paper relating to the impact of providing physical intervention training to Adoptive Parents and a policy statement that is clear and transparent, available to all agencies and Adoptive Parents.**
- **To write a policy and process for supporting children to transition from foster care to adoption.**
- **To be part of Cornerstones' Virtual Reality Pilot to ensure better preparation for Hampshire's adopters.**
- **To develop our partnership with the Virtual School, ahead of the statutory responsibility for previously Looked After Children, which comes into effect in September 2018.** To include joint information sharing about each other's services and how they can be accessed.
- **To continue to improve User Participation through the following;**
  - ✓ Developing the adopter's role in co-leading Stage 2 Training.
  - ✓ To build links with adult adoptees and involve them at Adoption Information Sessions/Preparation Training.
  - ✓ To continue to progress the Buddying/Mentoring Scheme.

- ✓ To improve participation of children and young people by providing activities for adopted children/young people and give them the opportunity to participate in events, which allow for the expression of their view and experiences.
- **To continue to support the work of the Regional Adoption Agency, developing services to be ready for April 2019.**

**Rachel Reynolds**  
**Adoption Service Manager**  
**September 2018**

## APPENDIX A

	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	Total
Number of adoption enquiries	39	49	41	58	68	52	42	59	32	44	80	24	<b>588</b>
Number of households attending an Information Session	13	23	9	12	17	14	21	18	6	15	25	17	<b>190</b>
RIF Forms returned	6	8	4	5	9	11	6	11	9	3	9	8	<b>89</b>
Number forwarded to Stage 1	6	7	4	5	9	11	6	11	9	3	9	8	<b>88</b>
Number of households attending Stage 1 and Stage 2 training	12	6	13	10	11	10	10	10	7	13	11	13	<b>126</b>
Number approved at Panel	3	6	7	2	4	5	3	5	4	5	5	6	<b>55</b>
Childrens Plans to Panel	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>1</b>
Children's Plans referred to ADM	6	4	4	13	5	4	5	9	4	3	13	10	<b>80</b>
Number of Linkings to Panel (number of children/sets of adopters)	7/6	6/4	4/3	7/5	5/5	6/5	6/5	9/7	4/4	5/5	3/3	7/5	<b>0</b>
Number of Linkings not approved	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Rescinding of Childrens Plans for adoption	0	0	2	0	2	0	0	6	0	1	0	0	<b>11</b>
Rescinding of approvals	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Rescinding of linking: (no of children/sets of adopters)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Existing adopters to panel re continued approval	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Cases referred to IRM	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Number of Adoption Orders made	5	8	9	5	2	5	2	2	7	3	5	2	<b>55</b>
Number of Placement Orders made	2	6	2	6	9	5	3	7	8	4	5	2	<b>59</b>
Available Adopters	19	20	20	15	19	17	16	16	19	15	16	17	
HCC adopters linked with Out of County Children	1	1	2	2	1	0	6	7	6	6	7	0	<b>39.00</b>

**APPENDIX B**

**Inter-agency Placements April 2017 to March 2018**

<b>Hampshire children linked/placed with adopters from other agencies</b>	<b>Date of Placement Order</b>	<b>Date of Linking</b>	<b>Date of Placement</b>	<b>Adopter(s) matched</b>	<b>Agency providing Adopters</b>	<b>Matching considerations</b>
J.S Male	19/05/16	11/01/18	26/01/18	Mr & Mrs I (Approved 23/03/17)	Barnardos	Adopters who can meet J's very complex needs. J is 6 years old, has experienced significant trauma and had a number of placement moves.

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## HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

### Report

<b>Committee/Panel:</b>	Children & Families Advisory Panel
<b>Date:</b>	16 October 2018
<b>Title:</b>	Regional Adoption Agency
<b>Report From:</b>	Stuart Ashley

**Contact name:** Amber James

**Tel:** 07595 495728

**Email:** Amber.james@hants.gov.uk

#### 1. Recommendation

That the Children & Families Advisory Panel notes the work being undertaken to create the Regional Adoption Agency, Adopt South, as required in legislation.

#### 2. Summary

- 2.1 In June 2015, the Department for Education (DfE) published 'Regionalising Adoption' and required all adoption agencies in England to consider how to work closely together on a regional basis. This was enacted as the Education and Adoption Act 2016, which required authorities and voluntary adoption agencies to join together to form Regional Adoption Agencies (RAAs).
- 2.2 The Government's view is that structural change will improve the process for children and adopters leading to increased numbers of children being adopted, a better quality experience for adopters and improved timeliness overall. The DfE expects the RAA programme to deliver consistently good and innovative adoption practice that ensures improved life chances for children.
- 2.3 The purpose of this paper is to share the approved model of delivery of regionalised adoption services across Hampshire County Council, the Isle of Wight Council, Portsmouth City Council and Southampton City Council. The RAA, to be known as Adopt South, was approved by the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services for Hampshire County Council on 12 July 2018 and will be live from 1 April 2019.

### **3. Contextual information**

- 3.1 In late 2015, the authorities in the Adopt South grouping were awarded DfE funding to undertake work to establish a model for regional adoption in the area, with an expectation that this would be fully embedded by no later than 2020.
- 3.2 The authorities have engaged actively since 2016 to develop a model that fulfils the criteria put in place by the DfE; that does not represent an unacceptable risk to any of the authorities involved; retains flexibility to enable authorities to respond to future policy; and, most importantly, is considered to provide genuine opportunities for improving the outcomes for children and families.
- 3.3 A model is now in place that sets out a clear operating model, service offer, structural model and financial framework. These are outlined in this report.
- 3.4 Adoption in Hampshire County Council is rated an 'Outstanding' service by Ofsted and the model proposed will not have an adverse effect on this. The model seeks to build on the current good practice within each authority to deliver a more cohesive, efficient and effective service for some of our most vulnerable children and their families. The service will be delivered at no extra cost to the taxpayer. The new RAA, to be known as Adopt South, will continue to work with its existing voluntary adoption agency partners and other key stakeholders to help shape the new service.

#### **Recommended operating model**

- 3.5 The principles underpinning the design of a Regional Adoption Agency in Hampshire have been that there should be consistency of the offer across the county; and that the overall offer should not lead to the offer in any one area of the county being reduced. This was felt to be particularly important in respect of the adoption support offer.
- 3.6 The recommended operating model for Adopt South will deliver the following main services across the Adopt South region:
- Recruitment, assessment and approval of adopters;
  - Matching of children in need of adoptive families;
  - Post- adoption support.

The proposed Adoption Support offer and delivery mechanisms across the RAA have been informed by detailed work by a group of senior adoption professionals across the Adopt South grouping. In the future, the model may be expanded to cover other adoption services.

- 3.7 In order to deliver the operating model and service offer, a revised structural model across the local authorities will be necessary, along with clear operating protocols.
- 3.8 Some of the above functions will be solely delivered by Adopt South on behalf of the region. These can be seen in Appendix 1 with the areas in green delivered by a centralised team for the RAA. However, many of the functions will require joint working and/or collaboration with local authority functions; these are shown in the areas in blue delivered by each local authority area on behalf of the RAA.
- 3.9 It is clear that one of the critical factors on which Adopt South's performance will depend is the strength of joint working and communication with colleagues within each local authority. Significant work has already been undertaken within the senior management team and will be progressed with middle managers and frontline workers during the next 6 months to build relationships, shape the vision and embed a positive culture within the RAA.
- 3.10 One significant remaining area of responsibility considered by the Governance Board was the delegation (or not) of corporate parenting responsibilities (and associated functions) for children with a plan for adoption from local authorities to Adopt South. It was concluded that the statutory responsibility for corporate parenting functions for children with a plan for adoption should remain with each local authority throughout the adoption process. This means that local authorities will retain Agency Decision Maker (ADM) responsibility for children (plans and matching).
- 3.11 Achieving the new structure as set out in Appendix 1 will be effected firstly by way of a partnership agreement under section 113 of the Local Government Act 1972 by which local authorities may place staff at the disposal of other local authorities in order to achieve their statutory functions.
- 3.12 The Head of the RAA role has been advertised and it is hoped that an appointment will be made in October 2018 following a robust interview process. That person will be employed by HCC, the role being funded by the partnership under the Agreement within existing budgets. This is a pivotal role to take the RAA forwards.
- 3.13 A further partner to the process is the voluntary sector, through Voluntary Adoption Agencies (VAAs). The DfE has stated its expectation that all RAAs will include VAAs in planning and development processes, and that VAAs will be involved in the delivery of some adoption services on behalf of RAAs.
- 3.14 Adopt South is committed to working closely with Voluntary Adoption Agencies, and have partnered with PACT and Barnardo's to achieve this. Adoption UK has the status of an Adoption Support Agency (ASA) but has also been advising the group as the RAA develops.

3.15 The vision and intended outcomes agreed by Adopt South include a commitment to maintaining a focus on meeting the needs of each child with a plan for adoption, via use of *the most appropriate services*. During all recent years, each of the four local authorities has commissioned adoption services from the VAA sector, particularly in the areas of adoption placements and adoption support and it is envisaged that this will continue.

#### 4. Finance

4.1 A key DfE criteria for achievement of a RAA is a pooled budget, similar to that for other partnership arrangements, notably the former Wessex Youth Offending Team.

4.2 The legal basis for establishing a pooled budget is given in Section 10(6) of the Children Act 2004, as follows:

***“(6) A children’s services authority in England and any of their relevant partners may for the purposes of arrangements under this section-***

***(a) provide staff, goods, services, accommodation or other resources;***  
***(b) establish and maintain a pooled fund.”***

4.3 The recommended starting point for the initial partner contributions was the individual authorities’ ‘in scope’ budgets as disaggregated from the 2017/18 figures. No additional funding has been added or is required. These budgets are those which cover the services Adopt South will become responsible for, so marketing, assessment, family finding, matching and adoption support. The contributions from the authorities are summarised as follows:

Net budget/spend	HCC	IWC	PCC	SCC	Total
	‘£000	‘£000	‘£000	‘£000	‘£000
2017/18 Budget	1,381	228	764	1,387	3,760

4.4 The significant contribution for Southampton City Council is representative of the approach taken within the Council up to 2017/18 to solely purchase adopters under inter-agency agreements rather than recruit in house. Therefore, as is demonstrated in the table above, Southampton City Council has to contribute more. On the basis of these contributions, there will be no further recourse to local authorities for funding for adoption services in scope of the RAA. If, for example, Southampton City Council uses more than the funded amount, they will need to fund this separately.

4.5 Partner contributions will be fixed for an initial two years and are subsequently reviewed for year three based on key indicators of activity. This is to provide some level of certainty for the new arrangements as they

are established, but also to ensure that the authorities themselves are insulated from any financial impact as a result of the arrangements.

- 4.6 Hampshire County Council will host and manage the pooled budget arrangements on behalf of the RAA. Transactions between the authorities will be minimised to avoid processing costs.

## **5. Next Steps**

- 5.1 In order to achieve the implementation of the new model of working, a number of areas of work are currently being undertaken:

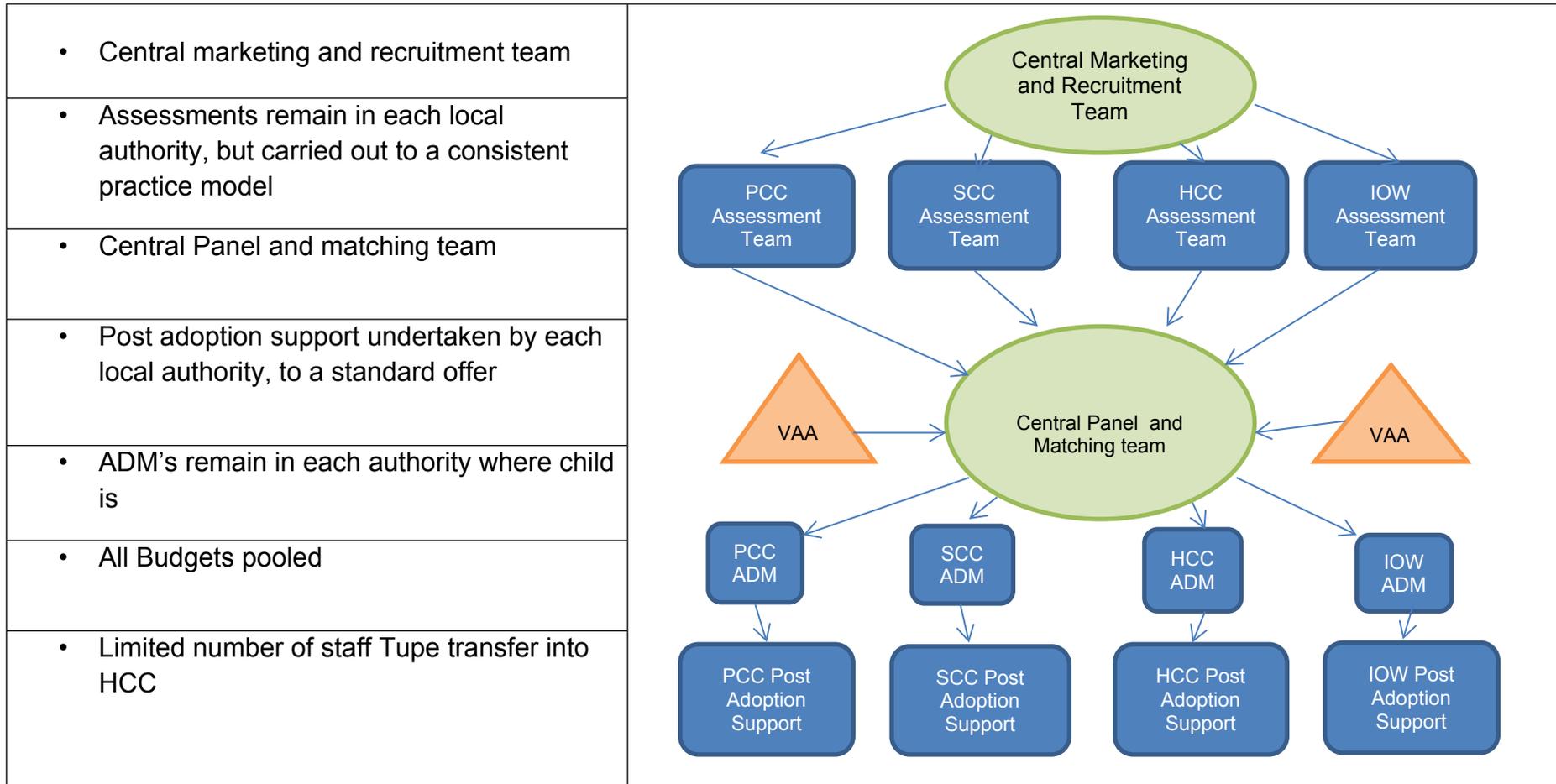
1. HR processes to achieve new structure (including recruitment of Head of RAA)
2. Implementation of the financial model
3. Developing back office
4. Implementation of the branding and marketing strategy
5. Implementation of IT solution
6. Development of the interagency agreements
7. Harmonisation of adoption allowances across the authorities
8. Establishment of regional panels, terminating existing contracts and procuring new arrangements with a suitable competitive process to ensure the VAA's involvement and support in the Adopt South model.
9. Matching arrangements
10. Practice development for assessment
11. Practice development for adoption support
12. Development of the RAA Adoption Manual
13. Commissioning Adoption Support external providers
14. Performance arrangements, including in shadow form to aid transition
15. Accommodation
16. Stakeholder communication (including staff communication and cultural change)

- 5.2 This work is being progressed by the four local authorities working in partnership, and the work will be monitored by the Governance Group. There is a high level of confidence in the ability of the four local authorities to achieve this based on the significant work that has been undertaken to date. The target date for implementation of the new arrangements is 1 April 2019, which is supported by the DfE.

## **6. Consultation and Equalities**

- 6.1 This project will have positive impacts on groups with protected characteristics providing opportunities for children to be adopted from a wider pool of adopters whom have access to a wider range of support services.

## Appendix 1 - Recommended Structural Operating Model



**CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:**

**Links to the Strategic Plan**

<b>Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:</b>	yes
<b>People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:</b>	yes
<b>People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:</b>	no
<b>People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:</b>	yes

**Other Significant Links**

<b>Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives</b>	
<u>Title</u> Adoption and Education Act 2016	<u>Date</u> <b>2016</b>

<b>Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents</b>	
<p>The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)</p>	
<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
None	

## **IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:**

### **1. Equality Duty**

1.1. The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

**Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:**

- a) The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant characteristic connected to that characteristic;
- b) Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- c) Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

### **1.2. Equalities Impact Assessment:**

This project will have positive impacts on groups with protected characteristics providing opportunities for children to be adopted from a wider pool of adopters whom have access to a wider range of support services.

### **2. Impact on Crime and Disorder:**

2.1. None identified

### **3. Climate Change:**

a) How does what is being proposed impact on our carbon footprint / energy consumption?

None identified

- b) How does what is being proposed consider the need to adapt to climate change, and be resilient to its longer term impacts?

None identified

## HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

### Report

<b>Committee/Panel:</b>	Children & Families Advisory Panel
<b>Date:</b>	16 October 2018
<b>Title:</b>	Progress report on Corporate Parenting Board
<b>Report From:</b>	Director of Children's Services

**Contact name:** Steph How

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**Email:** [stephanie.how@hants.gov.uk](mailto:stephanie.how@hants.gov.uk)

### 1. Recommendations

- 1.1. The CPB has been established for one year, during this time the CPB members have fully embraced their role as corporate parents for our children in care and care leavers. The CPB is in its formative stages, but emerging into a productive and inclusive Board. The decision to move towards the engagement of those involved in a young person's journey in care has enabled the CPB members to have a real sense of a child's journey. It is recommended that CFAP support the CPB to undertake this work.
- 1.2. Through meeting with young people, foster carers, social workers, teachers the CPB are engaging with those that experience the care system, enabling the CPB to influence change and act as the corporate parent to improve outcomes for children and young people.
- 1.3. It is recommended that the CFAP support the ongoing role of the CPB who can ensure that all of the services to children in care and care leavers are of a high standard, and to ensure that they are being well supported in all aspects of their life, including:
  - support and encouragement to achieve in school;
  - support and encouragement to after their mental health and wellbeing;
  - having opportunities for positive social integration; and
  - enabling the most vulnerable children and young people in society to flourish into the successful adults they can become.
- 1.4. It is recommended that a further progress report is provided to CFAP in twelve months.

## **2. Summary**

- 2.1. This is a report detailing the progress made by the Corporate Parenting Board (CPB) which was established a year ago. The report details the functions and set up of the CPB and the impact this has had on children in care and care leavers.
- 2.2. The work of the CPB is a significant factor in influencing change for children in care and care leavers, ensuring that the Council fulfil its duty to act as a corporate parent and provide the best care possible.
- 2.3. Whilst the CPB has been established for a year, and making good progress, it is still in its infancy, there have been positive relationships built and awareness amongst the children in care and care leaver population of the CPB and its purpose. This will only develop further over the next twelve months resulting in the CPB's influence over change intensifying. What is significant to note is how the young people who have met with the CPB members have felt listened to and how the members of the CPB are approachable. Equally the CPB members are open-minded and have made themselves available to children in care, care leavers and foster carers.

## **3. Background**

- 3.1. A report on Establishing a Corporate Parenting Board was presented to the Children & Families Advisory Panel (CFAP) on 17 October 2017. The report outlined that whilst the role of a corporate parent has been introduced since the Children Act 1989, the Children and Social Work Act 2017 (s1.1) defined for the first time in law what corporate parenting should be looking at to ensure, as far as possible, secure, nurturing and positive experiences for children looked after and care leavers. The seven core principles of the CPB being;
  - to act in the best interests, and promote the physical and mental health and well-being, of those children and young people;
  - to encourage those children and young people to express their views, wishes and feelings;
  - to take into account the views, wishes and feelings of those children and young people;
  - to help those children and young people gain access to, and make the best use of, services provided by the local authority and its relevant partners;
  - to promote high aspirations, and seek to secure the best outcomes, for those children and young people;
  - for those children and young people to be safe, and for stability in their home lives, relationships and education or work;
  - to prepare those children and young people for adulthood and independent living.

- 3.2. In order for Hampshire County Council to achieve its responsibility as a corporate parent, there was a need to create a sub-committee of the CFAP to act as a dedicated Corporate Parenting Board (CPB).
- 3.3. The role of the CPB would be to promote the best outcomes for children in care and care leavers and enable Councillor led engagement and advice to CFAP and the relevant Executive Member. The CFAP agreed to the formation of the sub-committee known as the Corporate Parenting Board and to the Terms of Reference also presented to the Board on 17 October 2017.
- 3.4. The questions that the CPB are to ask is “would this be good enough for my child/children” and the need to be aspirational in outcomes for our children in care and care leavers. Looking after and protecting children and young people is one of the most important jobs that councils do. Corporate parents have the responsibility to ensure that children in care, care leavers and other vulnerable children are supported well in order for them to achieve their full potential.
- 3.5. The CFAP appointed three Members to the Board, on a proportionate basis and identified one of them as Chairman and another as Vice-Chairman. In addition, the Children and Families Advisory Panel appointed a substitute member for each political group.
- 3.6. The Panel appointed Cllr Chadd (Chairman), Cllr Briggs (Vice-Chairman) and Cllr Wade alongside Cllr Carpenter (Conservative Deputy) and Cllr Porter (Liberal Democrat Deputy). It was agreed for the appointment of three co-opted Care Ambassadors as Members of the Board as set out in the Terms of Reference; Shannon Nicholls and Carla Wright and Dan Busby.
- 3.7. Those County Councillors on the CPB have a particular responsibility to review County Council policies effectively and improve corporate parenting within Hampshire. The CPB acts through recommendations to CFAP and the Executive Lead Member for Children’s Services, to ensure that all of the services to children in care and care leavers are of a high standard, and to ensure that they are being well supported in all aspects of their life, including:
  - support and encouragement to achieve in school;
  - support and encouragement to after their mental health and wellbeing;
  - having opportunities for positive social integration; and
  - enabling the most vulnerable children and young people in society to flourish into the successful adults they can become.
- 3.8. The Board meets with children in care and care leavers, frontline staff and foster carers / residential homes to enable it to inform CFAP of the standards of care offered to our children and young people.

#### **4. Progress of the Corporate Parenting Board**

- 4.1. The CPB sit four times a year, since its introduction there has been three Board meetings, 27 November 2017, 26 March 2018 and 13 July 2018, the next meeting is scheduled for 25 September 2018.
- 4.2. A programme of work was identified at the first meeting, (Appendix 1) enabling focus and ensuring that the CPB;
  - Review the outcomes for children in care and care leavers
  - Ensure that the Voice of children in care and care leavers is listened to, acted upon and incorporated into key plans, policies and strategies for children in care and care leavers
  - Ensures sufficient resources are available for the 'Care Ambassadors' to directly engage with all children in care and care leavers, and to commission and deliver agreed projects on behalf of the Hampshire County Council
  - Raise the profile of children in care and care leavers by promoting the role of Elected members as Corporate Parents with key responsibilities
  - Ensures that children and young people are clear about what they can expect from the County Council as corporate parents
- 4.3. The CPB first met on 27 November 2017, this was the introductory Board meeting where there was a presentation on the role and function of the CPB, the responsibilities as corporate parents to our children in care and care leavers and the Pledge was presented enabling CPB to have a great understanding of the functions and responsibilities of the Board.
- 4.4. The Protocol between the Hampshire Safeguarding Children Board and the Corporate Parenting Board was agreed due to an overlap in their responsibilities, this protocol outlined how the two Boards will exchange information and work together on areas of mutual interest. A report has recently been present to the Board reviewing this protocol and providing an update, which was well received.
- 4.5. The second meeting took place in March 2018; the agenda for this meeting was predominantly focused on the performance of children in care and care leavers and how this compared over the Hampshire area. This was statistical information with a narrative explaining the detail.

#### **5. Data Performance:**

- 5.1. Children's Services collate data and provide a return to Government to demonstrate the level of care we are providing our children who are looked after (CLA). A presentation detailed the number of children who were currently in care at that time. It is detailed of those children who

received their Health and Dental Reviews within 12 months, the number of children who had received their immunisations and the outcome of a Strength and Difficulties Questionnaire which considers the emotional needs of children in care. There is a designated nurse for children in care who works closely with Social Care to support and improve the health of this cohort of children and young people; they also attended the Board to share information on how plans are in place to continue to improve the health of CLA and Care Leavers. Information was also shared on the number of CLA reported Missing; the percentage of CLA with three or more placements in a year; the percentage of CLA who have been looked after continuously for two and a half years, or in the same placement for at least two years or placed for adoption and their adoptive and previous placement together lasted for more than two years; school attendance rates; the number of CLA who have an assessment to identify if they are at risk of Sexual Exploitation. This information was all noted by the CPB with a view to monitoring these in the future.

## **6. Education:**

- 6.1. There was a presentation on the Education of Children in Care identifying that the results for Early Years, Key Stage 1, 2 & 4 are all improving and are similar to the results for the same demographic nationally. An overview of the Virtual School and its future priorities was given, alongside a plan for how the priorities will be met. It was highlighted the difficulties in ensuring CLA achieved on par with the rest of their cohort and the importance of ensuring they are in good schools was a factor to support children progressing.
- 6.2. It was highlighted that there is currently work being completed with all schools in Hampshire to increase their understanding of the educational needs of CLA and to help schools understand the challenges CLA have to overcome. It was also noted that there is ongoing work required to increase the ambitions for the educational outcomes of CLA.

## **7. Care Leavers:**

- 7.1. The CPB received an update on Care Leavers with a focus on the Local Offer and the feedback received in relation to it. The Board heard that 525 Care Leavers had been consulted with and responses were received from 54 of them which is a good amount compared to usual survey response rates.
- 7.2. The CPB also heard how work is being undertaken with District Councils around Council Tax exemption, alongside charity involvement and support with Housing and Health for Care Leavers. There has also been a joint protocol established between Children and Adult's Services to ensure Care Leavers continue to be supported post 21 years, this was shared with the Board. In response to the mental health needs of

care leavers, and in line with Social Care's approach to develop more multi-agency working to enable a better response to the needs of all service users, Mental Health practitioners will be recruited to support care leavers experiencing mental health difficulties.

## **8. Feedback from Care Ambassadors:**

- 8.1. The Care Ambassadors are currently reviewing The Pledge to ensure it focuses on the priorities of children in care and care leavers.
- 8.2. It was also shared how CPB had recently met with the Director of Children's Services and other Care Ambassadors and it was thought to be a beneficial experience for all involved. Care Ambassadors have also been involved in interviews for senior Children Service's staff, most recently the new Area Director. One Care Ambassador has visited Whitehall and shadowed a Civil Servant in the Department of Education. There followed a conversation about the possibility of similar opportunities being set up within Hampshire County Council. In addition to the Care Ambassador role a Care Mentor role has been established and there are currently 16 Young People in these roles.

## **9. Outcome of the Bright Spots Survey:**

- 9.1. An overview of the outcomes of the Bright Spots survey in relation to Education for Children in Care, this was an anonymous questionnaire, set up by an independent agency. There was a positive response rate to this, likely due to the Independent Reviewing Officers encouraging the CLA to complete the survey at a CLA review.
- 9.2. The main aspect picked up on from the survey was the large number of respondents who said they were afraid to go to school due to bullying. This was not expected and has led to the creation of an action plan to respond to this concern. There were also concerns in relation to young people not knowing the detail of their plans and being unaware of why they have moved placements.

## **10. Use of technology to increase the engagement of CLA and Care Leavers:**

- 10.1. It was shared that Social Care are reviewing the current use of technology with the aim to increase the involvement of young people & care ambassadors, different apps and social media sites are being considered. The current webpages were being refreshed to look more up to date, work on mobile devices and act as a hub for social media.

## **11. Workstyle:**

- 11.1. Due to the pressures on practitioners to meet the needs of the children and young people the CPB heard that 'Social Worker Personal

Assistants' were being rolled out to assist Children in Care teams, this will enable practitioners to spend more time out of the office with children and young people. This is further supported through the issuing of new hybrid IT devices for practitioners that can be use for direct work with CLA and care leavers, but also create flexible working.

## **12. Structure of the meeting**

- 12.1. It was identified within the meeting of 27 November 2017 that it was very formal and corporately driven, there was a lot of information shared that Social Care collate, but little sense of the individual experience of a child or young person through their journey in care. It was considered that due to the formality of the meeting, it was not enabling the engagement of children and young people. This second meeting was reflected upon and considered that in order to become child inclusive and enable the participation at a level where decisions are shared adult and child decisions, the structure needed to be adjusted.
- 12.2. It was felt that the formal reports would still be required, but would not be the main focus of the CPB, but that the CPB members would meet with different groups of young people or carers people prior to the CPB where they can share their experiences and journey, this would direct the agenda for the CPB.

## **13. Engagement of Young People**

- 13.1. At the third CPB held on 13 July 2018, the CPB members shared feedback from an informal meeting that had taken place prior to the CPB. The CPB members had been available to meet the group of young people and to discuss their experiences from within the care system environment. Members had met with eight individuals, ranging in age between 12 and 17 years. Officers had also been present on the day to facilitate the discussion and to make introductions. All Members felt that the meeting had been extremely beneficial and they had valued the discussions with the young people and the feedback that they had received.
- 13.2. It was noted that the meeting had helped Members to understand how the transition through the care system had worked for each individual and Members were keen to learn more and to speak further with other young people to understand the experience from their perspectives.
- 13.3. It was highlighted the importance of an individual's initial experience of being placed in care and how this could be better supported, particularly when this is in an emergency. Furthermore, it was noted that leaving a care placement for an alternative placement was also an important time. Specific suggestions were proposed, such as creating a leaflet with relevant information for children entering into the care system, the

possibility of video conferencing with future foster parents and producing welcome/leavers packs.

13.4. Arising from the meeting with young people, it had been agreed that:

- A second, informal meeting for Members would be arranged with the same group of young people.
- The Chairman would write to the young people to thank them and to provide an update on how their ideas and suggestions had informed future work.
- Another informal meeting with an alternative group of young people and an informal meeting with foster carers would be arranged to enable Members to gain further insight and understanding.

#### **14. Future Board Meetings**

14.1. From the information collated to date, it was considered that the future Board meetings should consider;

- A detailed update on foster placements – incorporating the number of placements across Hampshire and some background information to provide members with information about how placements are sought and allocated.
- An update on the ongoing strategy for the recruitment of foster carers.
- That the CPB members would hold an informal meeting with another group of CLA and Foster Carers to continue to understand the needs of CLA and Care Leavers.

**CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:**

**Links to the Corporate Strategy**

<b>Hampshire safer and more secure for all:</b>	y
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	
<b>Maximising well-being:</b>	y
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	
<b>Enhancing our quality of place:</b>	y
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	

**Other Significant Links**

<b>Links to previous Member decisions:</b>		
<u>Title</u> Establishing a Corporate Parenting Board	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Date</u> 17 October 2017
<b>Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives</b>		
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>	

**Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents**

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
None	

## **IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:**

### **1. Equality Duty**

- 1.1. The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:
- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act;
  - Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
  - Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

#### **Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:**

The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant characteristic connected to that characteristic;

Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic different from the needs of persons who do not share it;

Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

### **1.2. Equalities Impact Assessment:**

#### **Impact on Crime and Disorder:**

No significant impact

#### **Climate Change:**

How does what is being proposed impact on our carbon footprint / energy consumption?

How does what is being proposed consider the need to adapt to climate change, and be resilient to its longer term impacts?

No impact on climate change identified.

## HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

### Report

<b>Committee/Panel:</b>	Children and Families Advisory Panel
<b>Date:</b>	16 October 2018
<b>Title:</b>	Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) in Hampshire
<b>Report From:</b>	Director of Children's Services

**Contact name:** Sue Kocaman, Area Manager

**Tel:** 01962 846831

**Email:** sue.kocaman@hants.gov.uk

#### 1. Recommendation

- 1.1 That the Children and Families Advisory Panel note the content of the report (attached at Appendix A) and the activity being undertaken to support UASC in Hampshire.

#### 2. Summary

- 2.1 The purpose of this short report is to update the Children and Families Advisory Panel on the number of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) being cared for by Hampshire Children's Services. The report will also highlight activity in this area and consider any issues in relation to this work.

#### 3. Contextual Information

- 3.1 Running total of UASC placed in Hampshire April 2017 to August 2018;

Month	Apr-17	May-17	Jun-17	Jul-17	Aug-17	Sep-17	Oct-17	Nov-17	Dec-17
<b>Total UASC</b>	83	86	86	91	92	99	104	106	114
Month	Jan-18	Feb-18	Mar-18	Apr-18	May-18	Jun-18	Jul-18	Aug-18	
<b>Total UASC</b>	116	113	109	115	117	114	131	132	

- 3.2 The above table details the number of UASC that are looked after by Children's Services. On 31 August 2018, 132 children aged between 12 and 17 years were placed in foster care or supportive accommodation.

In addition they are 93 young people aged 18 to 25 who are being supported by Children's Services as care leavers.

- 3.3 Approximately half of the UASC looked after by Hampshire have been accepted through the National Transfer Scheme. This scheme ensures that responsibility is taken as a region for UASC who are entering the country. A number of local authorities such as Kent and Portsmouth have high numbers of UASC and as a way of alleviating pressure on services in these areas, UASC are transferred to neighbouring local authorities through the scheme which is operated by the South East Migration Team in this region. It is suggested that each local authority should support a number of UASC that equates to 0.007% of the population (for Hampshire this would be 192 USAC). In Hampshire at the end of August 2018 there were 132 UASC who are looked after and are part of the 0.007% 192 cohort. As the 93 care leavers are over the age of 18 they do not form part of the cohort.
- 3.4 UASC arriving in Hampshire are typically older teenagers, so although there has been an increase in arrivals there has also been an increase of young people leaving the cohort and moving into the care leaver cohort.
- 3.5 Over the summer months there has been an increase in spontaneous arrivals into Hampshire. These children arrivals typically arrive by lorry and are detained by the police at service stations along the M3/M27 motorway and similar. In addition immigration, through targeted operations, has started to identify other UASC for example a young Vietnamese girl residing with the owners of a nail bar in Basingstoke. Assessment and investigation into this case determined that the girl at the very least had been smuggled into the country potentially trafficked.
- 3.6 Following on from Hampshire being very proactive in offering placements following the closure of the Calais camp in November 2016, we have continued to offer placements through the transfer scheme. Hampshire's contribution and willingness to support the transfer scheme is held in very high regard by the South East Migration Service.
- 3.7 In addition to activity within the transfer scheme and the increase in spontaneous arrivals, HCC have been approached on two occasions within the last six months by Portsmouth City Council, who experience particular problems due to being a port local authority. On each of these occasions, Portsmouth had discovered large groups of asylum seekers entering the country. Hampshire have identified placements and accommodated between 5 and 7 young people for Portsmouth, taking full legal and financial case responsibility.
- 3.8 In respect of allocation to social worker teams in Hampshire, young people arriving through the transfer scheme are allocated directly to Children in Care teams. Those arriving of their own accord generally are

allocated initially within Childrens Assessment and Safeguarding teams (CAST). The Willow Team ( a multi-agency team of staff working with children at risk of or subject to exploitation) are involved with all cases, ensuring that appropriate trafficking assessments are completed and safety plans are in place. A section 47 (Child Protection) investigation is undertaken on all new UASC arriving in Hampshire.

- 3.9 There are a number of challenges in caring for and supporting these young people. The main challenges are in terms of placements, interpreters, health care and immigration.

#### **4. Placements**

- 4.1 A large number of UASC are placed with Independent Fostering Agency (IFA) carers. These placements are expensive, costing on average over £730 per week. A large proportion of these placements are outside of Hampshire. Hampshire now has a number of UASC placed in London and the surrounding areas. The distance has an impact on the social workers ability to build a relationship with the young person or their carer, although it is acknowledged this applies to all children in care placed at distance. Potentially the issue of local placements could be more significant for UASC, where there are concerns that the young person has been trafficked into the country, with the risk being increased with a higher proportion of placements in certain areas.
- 4.2 Two teams in Hampshire are currently piloting the use of specialist workers (one Social Worker in a Child in Care team and one Personal Adviser in a Care Leavers team) who are based in London and work exclusively with UASC in and around the London Area. The pilot has been in place for 3-4 months and will be evaluated to inform decisions about how such arrangements benefit children and young adults, and reduce travel time for social workers and PAs in Hampshire.
- 4.3 There is often very little if any information in respect of UASC and placements are nearly always made in an emergency, therefore there is often little if any matching of placements and this lack of matching will have an impact on the stability of placement. In addition, it is often more difficult to access resources for a young person residing outside of the responsible local authority, especially services attending to children's emotional health and well-being.

#### **5. Education**

- 5.1 The virtual school provides a good service to UASC up to year 11, however there are some difficulties being experienced when the young person is due to transfer to college. Some colleges require all attendees to speak English and ESOL courses can be difficult to source. These issues can mean that some young people are sometimes forced to travel long distances to attend.

5.2 Some colleges do not allow entry mid year having only one intake in September, leading to some UASC being out of education for long periods. In other cases children are only offered a few hours education per week.

## **6. Interpreters**

6.1 Good practice determines that interpreters are required every time the social worker meets with the young person. Obviously, the demand for interpreting services has increased and the preferred provider (Lingland) is also finding the demand for their services a challenge. With a large proportion of placements occurring out of county arrangements for transport for the interpreter are also falling to the social worker. In addition social workers are often visiting a number of UASC in the same day, which also requires the coordination of several interpreters. Interpreters are not always available out of hours which are when a lot of these young people are discovered.

## **7. Health/Therapy**

7.1 Although the initial health assessment is carried out by the CLA nurse, appointments can be difficult for UASC. For some children who have never been to see a doctor or a dentist the experience may be harrowing to them and therefore extra appointments or time at appointments may be required. An interpreter is also required for medical appointments. There are no current issues with being able to register young people with Doctors in Hampshire.

7.2 In terms of accessing therapy through CAMHS this is largely linked to the area where a young person is placed. These young people have experienced difficult journeys, often travelling through conflict areas and have been exploited and abused. At this stage their therapeutic needs are unlikely to be clear, however they are expected to be significant.

## **8. Immigration**

8.1 The immigration process has changed, meaning that the majority of cases are dealt with via an appointment through the Home Office. There have been some recent difficulties in securing appointments and ensuring that a young person has legal representation at any identified appointment. This means that some older children have not had their immigration status resolved by the time they reach adulthood, and in those cases, the young adult will have no recourse to public funds and will be entirely dependent on children's services for income on which to live.

## **9. Conclusion**

- 9.1 In conclusion, there continues to be a flow of UASC coming into Hampshire. The future trend is impossible to predict but the children are all well protected and become 'Looked after Children', and then Care Leavers which means they can go on receiving support and advice up to the age of 25yrs.

**CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:****Links to the Strategic Plan**

<b>Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:</b>	yes
<b>People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:</b>	yes
<b>People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:</b>	yes
<b>People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:</b>	yes

**Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents**

**The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)**

DocumentLocation

None

## **IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:**

### **1. Equality Duty**

1.1. The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

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- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

**Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:**

- a) The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant characteristic connected to that characteristic;
- b) Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- c) Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

### **1.2. Equalities Impact Assessment:**

A high level Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken. The grants are intended to have a positive impact and advance equality.

### **2. Impact on Crime and Disorder:**

2.1 Not applicable.

### **3. Climate Change:**

a) How does what is being proposed impact on our carbon footprint / energy consumption?

Not applicable.

b) How does what is being proposed consider the need to adapt to climate change, and be resilient to its longer term impacts?

Not applicable.

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

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