

# Corporate Parenting Panel AGENDA

**DATE:** Tuesday 10 January 2012

**TIME:** 6.00 pm

**VENUE:** Committee Room 6,  
Harrow Civic Centre

## **MEMBERSHIP** (Quorum 3)

---

**Chairman:** Councillor Mitzi Green

### **Councillors:**

Margaret Davine  
Brian Gate

Christine Bednell (VC)  
Janet Mote  
Lynda Seymour

### **Reserve Members:**

---

1. William Stoodley  
2. Raj Ray  
3. Varsha Parmar

1. –  
2. John Nickolay  
3. Husain Akhtar

**Contact:** Mark Doherty, Democratic Services Officer  
Tel: 020 8416 8050 E-mail: [mark.doherty@harrow.gov.uk](mailto:mark.doherty@harrow.gov.uk)

# **AGENDA - PART I**

## **1. ATTENDANCE BY RESERVE MEMBERS**

To note the attendance at this meeting of any duly appointed Reserve Members.

Reserve Members may attend meetings:-

- (i) to take the place of an ordinary Member for whom they are a reserve;
- (ii) where the ordinary Member will be absent for the whole of the meeting; and
- (iii) the meeting notes at the start of the meeting at the item 'Reserves' that the Reserve Member is or will be attending as a reserve;
- (iv) if a Reserve Member whose intention to attend has been noted arrives after the commencement of the meeting, then that Reserve Member can only act as a Member from the start of the next item of business on the agenda after his/her arrival.

## **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

To receive declarations of personal or prejudicial interests, arising from business to be transacted at this meeting, from:

- (a) all Members of the Panel;
- (b) all other Members present in any part of the room.

## **3. MINUTES (Pages 1 - 6)**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 3 October 2011 be taken as read and signed as a correct record.

## **4. PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

To receive questions (if any) from local residents or organisations under the provisions of Executive Procedure Rule 51 (Part 4D of the Constitution).

## **5. PETITIONS**

To receive petitions (if any) submitted by members of the public/Councillors under the provisions of Executive Procedure Rule 49 (Part 4D of the Constitution).

## **6. DEPUTATIONS**

To receive deputations (if any) under the provisions of Executive Procedure Rule 50 (Part 4D of the Constitution).

## **7. INFORMATION REPORT - ACTIVITY AND PERFORMANCE (Pages 7 - 28)**

Report of the Corporate Director of Children's Services.

## **8. HOUSING FOR CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER WHO ARE LEAVING LOCAL AUTHORITY CARE (Pages 29 - 36)**

Report of the Corporate Director of Children's Services.

**9. DISPLAY FOR COUNCILLORS (Pages 37 - 40)**

Report of the Corporate Director of Children's Services.

**10. INFORMATION REPORT - CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL WORK PROGRAMME 2011/12 (Pages 41 - 44)**

Joint report of the Director of Legal and Governance Services and the Corporate Director of Children's Services.

**11. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

Which cannot otherwise be dealt with.

**AGENDA - PART II - NIL**

This page is intentionally left blank

# CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL

## MINUTES

### 3 OCTOBER 2011

**Chairman:** \* Councillor Mitzi Green

**Councillors:** \* Christine Bednell \* Varsha Parmar (3)  
\* Margaret Davine \* Lynda Seymour  
\* Janet Mote

\* Denotes Member present  
(3) Denotes category of Reserve Member

#### 44. Attendance by Reserve Members

**RESOLVED:** To note the attendance of the following duly constituted Reserve Member:

Ordinary Member

Reserve Member

Councillor Brian Gate

Councillor Varsha Parmar

#### 45. Declarations of Interest

**RESOLVED:** To note that there were no declarations of interests made by Members.

#### 46. Minutes

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 12 July 2011, be taken as read and signed as a correct record.

#### 47. Public Questions, Petitions and Deputations

**RESOLVED:** To note that no public questions were put, or petitions or deputations received at this meeting.

## RESOLVED ITEMS

### 48. Information Report - Activity and Performance

An officer introduced a report which set out key data relating to Children Looked After (CLA) and Children with Child Protection Plans (CPP). The report also included the performance position for key indicators for Children's Social Care. The officer advised that:

- overall performance was good, with six adoptions being granted;
- new key performance indicators had been devised to monitor areas such as absence from school.

In response to questions, officers advised that:

- the successful adoption of younger CLA meant that the 16-17 year old cohort remained higher than in previous years;
- out of the 19 CLA that took their GCSE's, 6 had special educational needs and 2 were seeking asylum. These children studied meaningful courses that were appropriate to their learning and sat alternative examinations;
- placement disruptions in May/June 2011 prevented 2 CLA from sitting their GCSE examinations;
- cumulative performance figures reflected that the cohort taking their GCSEs may not have engaged in the same way throughout the course of the school year;
- each child had a Personal Education Plan (PEP). An allowance of £500 could be granted should a child have a specific need that could not be catered for through their plan;
- the Council was seeking to recruit a permanent Virtual Headteacher (VHT). An action plan which took account of the work undertaken by previous VHTs to enable the new recruit to target areas of greatest priority was being compiled. Six candidates had been short-listed for interview. A new VHT could be in place by November 2011, dependant on the duration of notice;
- including a column in the report which highlighted how many CLA were in each key performance category would be considered.

**RESOLVED:** That the report be noted.

### 49. Information Report - Annual Report Fostering and Adoption

An officer introduced a report which provided a summary of the adoption and fostering service in Harrow. He advised that:

- the adoption and fostering service was also responsible for areas such as Inter-country Adoption, Special Guardianship and Adoption Counselling;
- the work being conducted was that of a standard which was being recognised nationally;
- short break placements funded by the Government Aiming High grant, provided children with disabilities the opportunity to remain at home and have regular breaks with their families.

In response to a question, officers advised that Children Looked After were not obliged to leave their placement when they reached eighteen years of age. Support was provided until they felt confident enough to make that transition. The decision to leave their placement was taken in conjunction with each young person, their social worker and the Placements Team and was considered on an individual basis. Staff at the Honey Pot Lane Residential Unit assisted young people in making such decisions. The Leaving Care Team also offered support during this time to ensure a smooth transition to independence.

**RESOLVED:** That the report be noted.

#### **50. Celebrating Achievements of Children Looked After - Update**

An officer provided a verbal update on the progress made with the arrangements for celebrating the achievements of Children Looked After (CLA) event. She advised that the event would:

- take place at the Harrow Arts Centre on 16 November 2011;
- be attended by CLA and care leavers;
- be arranged with the assistance of Beyond Limits;
- include refreshments and entertainment;
- be open to all birth parents;
- welcome nominations for awards in categories such as participation and improved behaviour.

The Chairman confirmed that as Corporate Parents, all Harrow's Councillors would be invited to the event. Due to limited capacity, the invite would need to be accepted within a set timeframe.

**RESOLVED:** That the update be noted.

#### **51. INFORMATION REPORT - Children's Services Complaints Annual Report 2010-11**

An officer introduced a report which set out the statutory Children's Services Annual Report for 2010/11. He advised that:

- a significant amount of work had been undertaken to make feedback more accessible to young people. This included providing a free-phone telephone number and a text messaging service;
- since the introduction of mediation in 2005/06 the number of complaints that were escalated had continued to significantly reduce. Feedback from young people on mediation was positive;

In response to questions, officers advised that:

- mediation participants were also informed that their complaint could be escalated should they wish to do so;
- correspondence between parents reflected that the focus was on what the young person wanted;
- an independent person could be enlisted to advise on what would be best in particular cases.

**RESOLVED:** That the report be noted.

## **52. INFORMATION REPORT - Corporate Parenting Panel Work Programme 2011/12**

The Chairman of the Panel introduced a Work Programme which listed topics for the Panel to consider at each meeting. This did not preclude further items from being presented to the Committee if necessary. She reiterated that the Work Programme would be a standing item at the end of each agenda for information purposes.

An officer proposed that the Work Programme be shared with those from Beyond Limits to promote two-way engagement and allow them to suggest topics which they believe the Panel should consider.

**RESOLVED:** That

- (1) the Corporate Parenting Panel Work Programme 2011/12 be agreed;
- (2) the Work Programme be shared with those from Beyond Limits.

## **53. Further Announcements**

### Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) Checks

To advocate transparency and as a matter of best practice, the Chairman reminded Members of the need to ensure that a CRB check had been conducted within the last three years. Information on how to complete the check would be sent to those who were unfamiliar with the process.



### Meeting with Beyond Limits

The Chairman requested officers to liaise with Beyond Limits to arrange another less formal meeting at a time and venue that was suitable for them.

### Executive Summary

An officer would undertake to compile an executive summary of the discussion at future Corporate Parenting Panel meetings to ensure that topics considered were recorded in a manner which was more attractive to young people.

**RESOLVED:** That the items be noted.

(Note: The meeting, having commenced at 6.00 pm, closed at 7.15 pm).

(Signed) COUNCILLOR MITZI GREEN  
Chairman

**Officer Attendance:**

Gail Hancock - Head of Service, Safeguarding and Family Support

Peter Tolley - Service Manager, Family Placement and Support

Dipika Patel - Team Manager, Children's Social Care, Performance & Data Quality

Adeline Abraham – Children in Care Participation Officer

**REPORT FOR: CORPORATE  
PARENTING PANEL**

---

<b>Date:</b>	10 January 2012
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>INFORMATION REPORT – Activity and Performance</b>
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	Catherine Doran, Corporate Director of Children’s Services
<b>Exempt:</b>	No
<b>Enclosures:</b>	Appendix 1: CLA & CPP Activity and Performance Report

**Section 1 – Summary**

This report is for information and sets out key data relating to Children Looked After (CLA) and Children with Child Protection Plans (CPP), plus performance position for Key Indicators for Children’s Social Care.

## Section 2 – Report

Key Points:

- Data is shown to end of November 2011.
- 6 adoptions/SGOs granted in 2011/12 so far.
- Proportion of CLA aged 16-17 remains higher than in previous years.
- Number of CPP has decreased and is now lower than the number of CLA.
- New indicators to monitor school attendance and exclusion of CLA.
- New CLA health data section is added.

## Section 3 – Further Information

All information is contained within the report

## Section 4 – Financial Implications

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

## Section 5 – Equalities Implications

An Equality Impact Assessment has not been carried out. This information report forms part of the ongoing monitoring for corporate parenting.

### Risk Management Implications

The risk relating to workload and staffing for child protection is already included in the corporate risk register.

Risk included on Directorate risk register? Yes

Separate risk register in place? No

## Section 6 – Corporate Priorities

- Improve support for vulnerable people

Name: Emma Stabler	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer
Date: 8 December 2011		

## Section 7 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact:

David Harrington, Service Manager, Performance  
020 8424 9248 david.harrington@harrow.gov.uk

Dipika Patel, Senior Performance Officer, Children's Social Care  
020 8424 9258 dipika.patel@harrow.gov.uk

**Background Papers:** None

This page is intentionally left blank



Appendix 1:

# Corporate Parenting Report

## January 2012

Children Looked After  
Children Subject to a Child Protection Plan  
(Activity to end of November 2011)

## CONTENTS

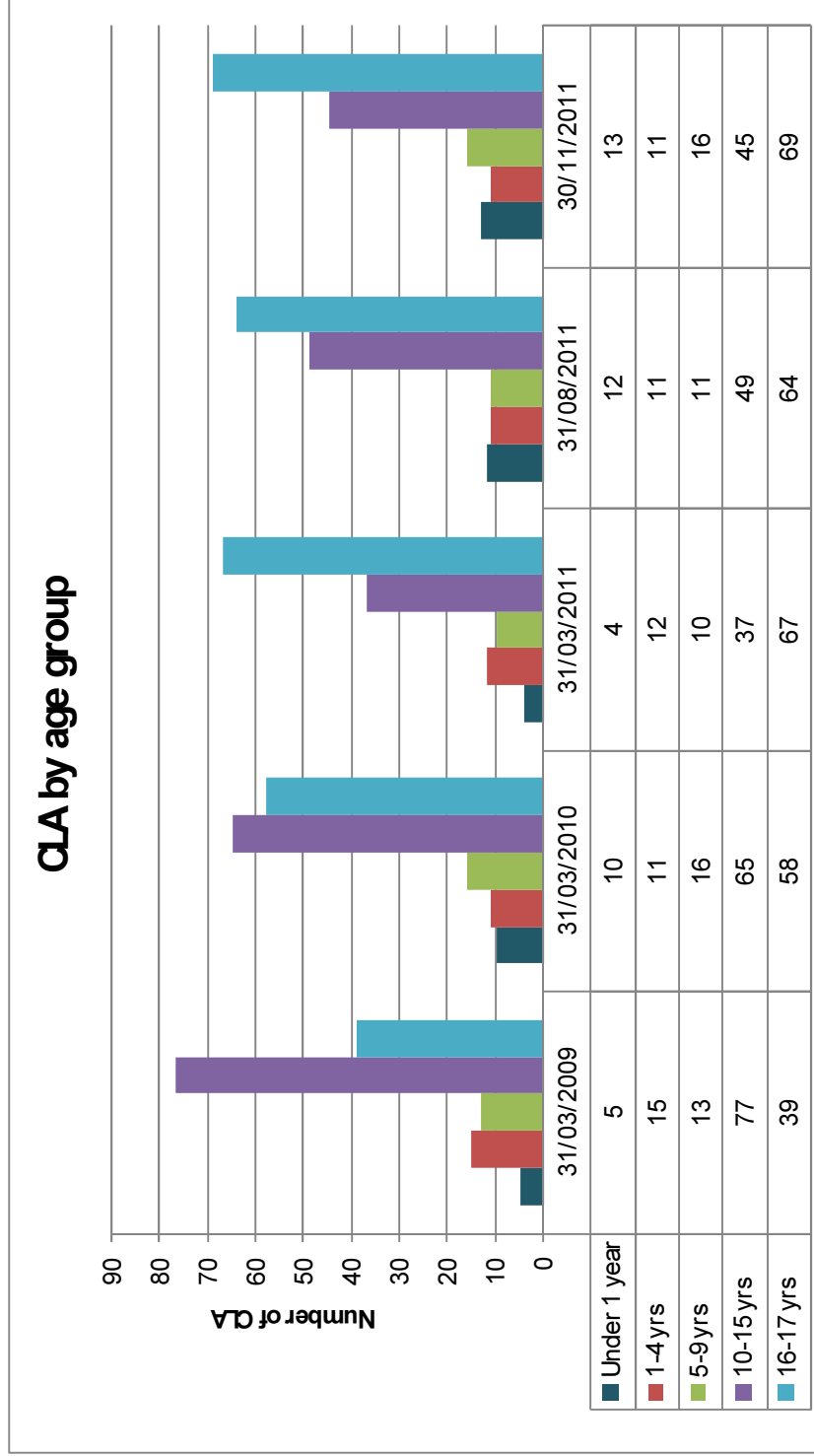
<b>PART A: CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER (CLA)</b> .....	3
1) CLA BY AGE .....	3
2) CLA BY ETHNICITY .....	4
3) CLA BY GENDER .....	5
4) CLA BY PLACEMENT TYPE .....	6
5) CLA BY CATEGORY OF NEED .....	7
6) CLA EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT .....	8
7) CLA HEALTH DATA .....	8
8) CLA - OTHER DATA .....	8
<b>PART B: CHILDREN SUBJECT TO A CHILD PROTECTION PLAN (CPP)</b> .....	9
9) CPP BY AGE .....	9
10) CPP BY ETHNICITY .....	10
11) CPP BY GENDER .....	11
12) CPP BY CATEGORY OF ABUSE .....	12
13) CPP BY DURATION OF PLAN .....	13
<b>PART C: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION</b> .....	14
14) NUMBERS OF CLA & CPP .....	14
15) KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS FOR Q2 2011 (SEPTEMBER) .....	15



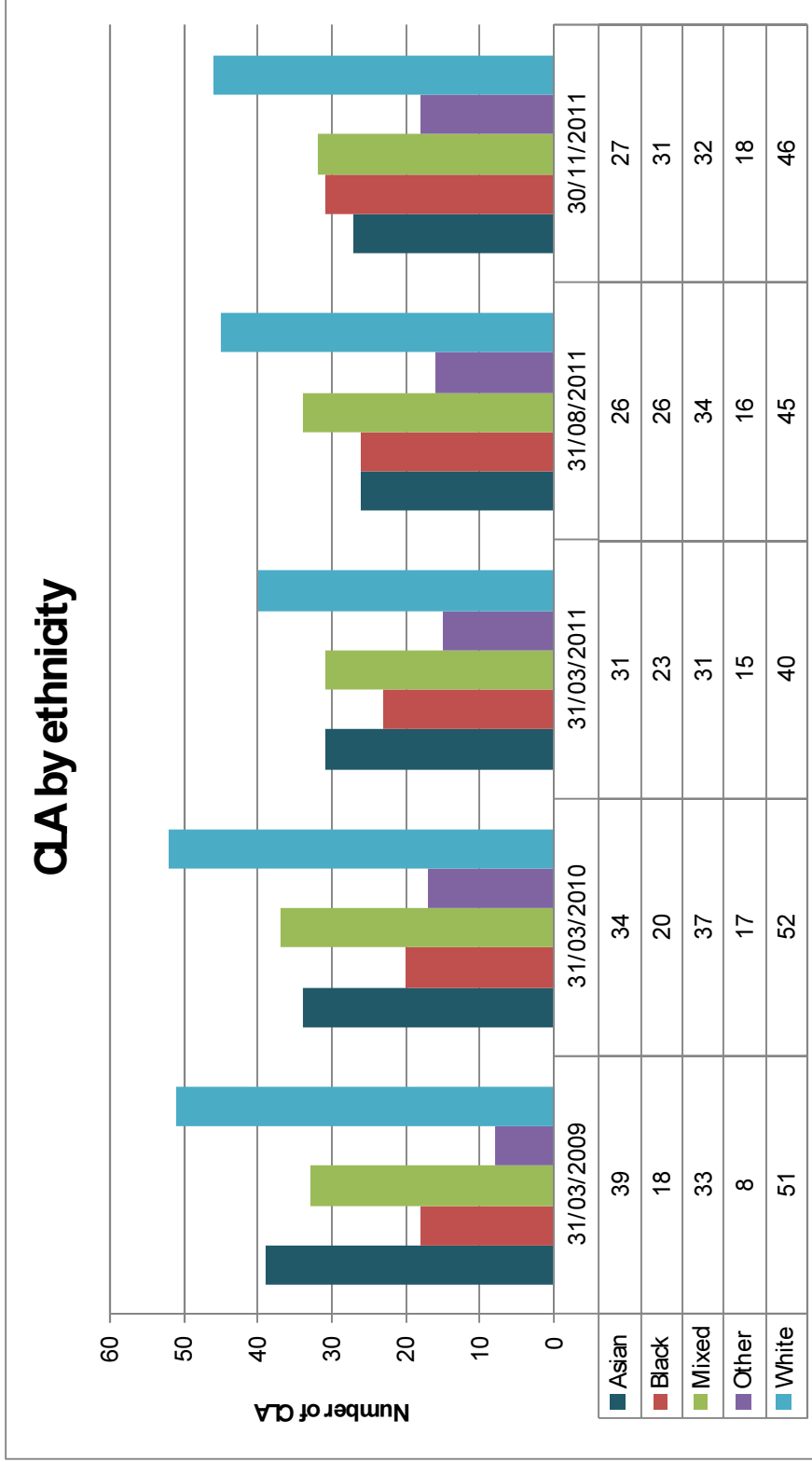
## Part A: Children Looked After (CLA)

There were 154 CLA in Harrow on 30 November 2011. There were also an additional 4 children receiving respite care / short term breaks (these are not included in the numbers in this report).

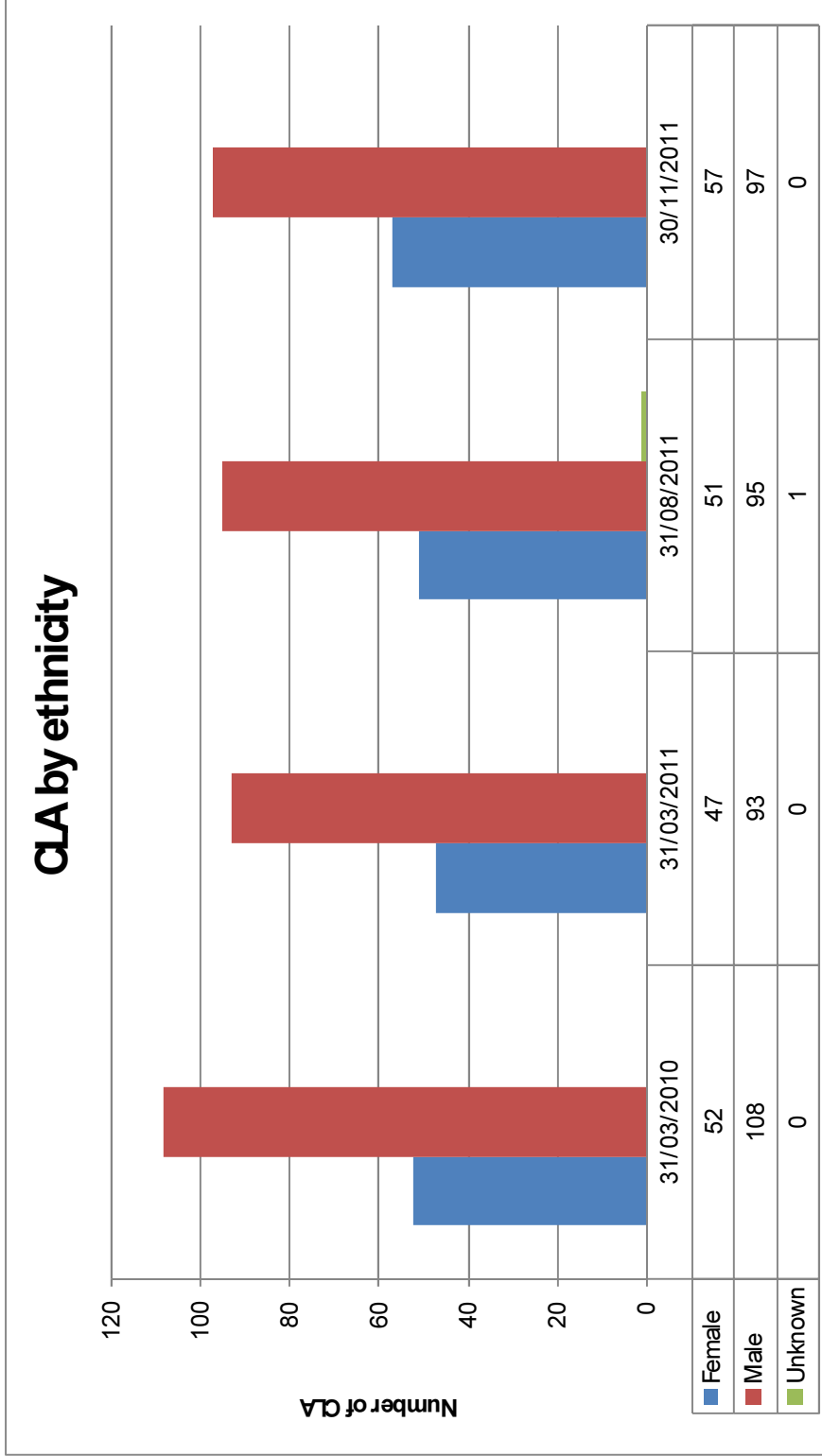
### 1) CLA by Age



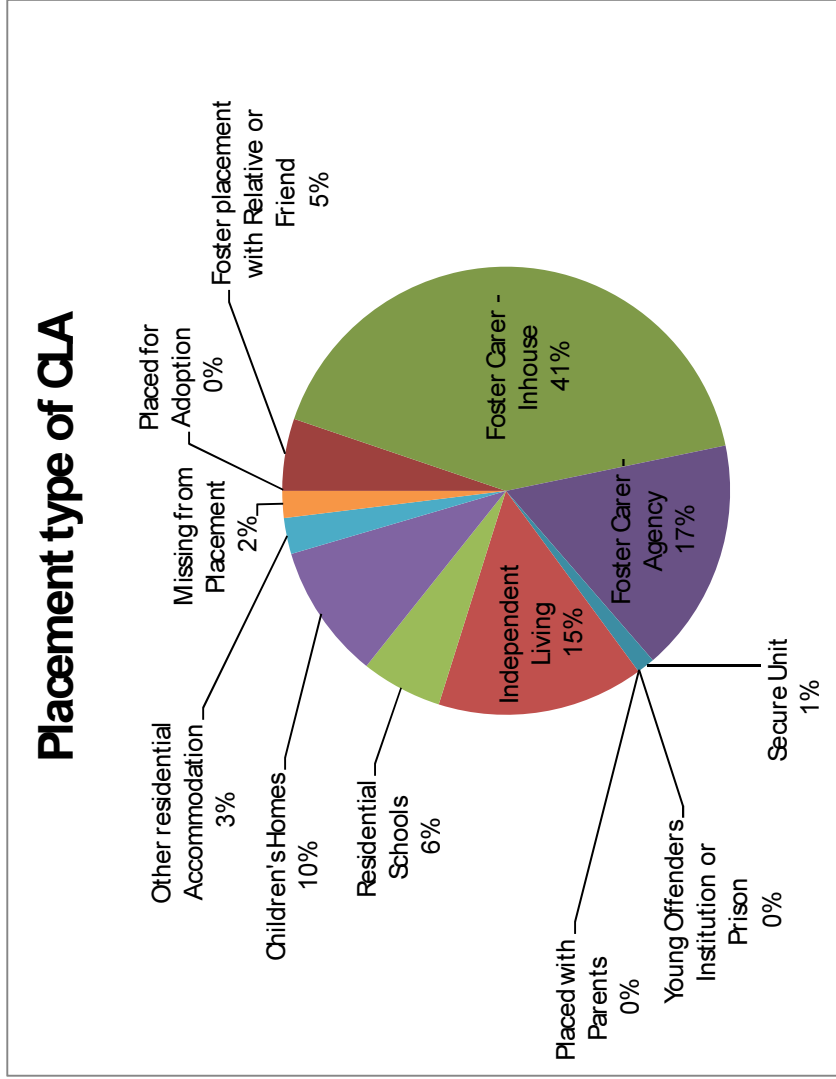
2) CLA by Ethnicity



### 3) CLA by Gender



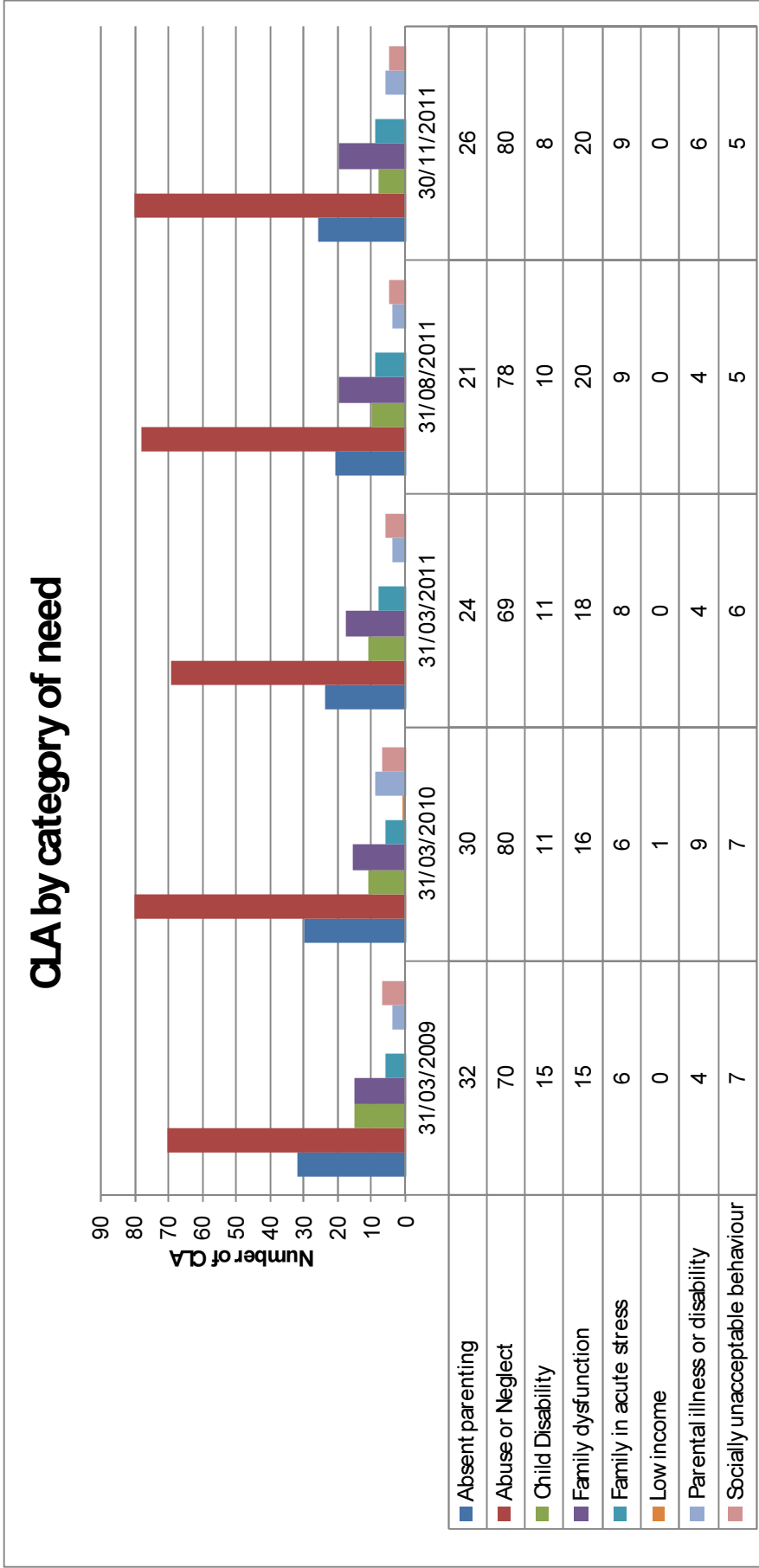
#### 4) CLA by Placement Type



Placement Type	
Placed for Adoption	0
Foster placement with Relative or Friend	8
Foster Carer - Inhouse	64
Foster Carer - Agency	26
Secure Unit	2
Young Offenders Institution or Prison	0
Placed with Parents	0
Independent Living	23
Residential Schools	9
Children's Homes	15
Other residential Accommodation	4
Missing from Placement	3
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>154</b>

## 5) CLA by Category of Need

The breakdown of category of need as recorded when a child becomes looked after.



## 6) CLA educational attainment

(Clients looked after for over a year at 31/03/11)	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011 (prov)
<b>Total children in KS2 cohort:</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
Attained at least Level 4 in Maths at end of KS2	25%	43%	50%	50%	50%
Attained at least Level 4 in English at end of KS2	50%	43%	50%	50%	0%
Attained at least Level 4 in both English and Maths	new	new	new	new	0%
<b>Total young people in GCSE cohort:</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>19</b>
GCSE: Attained at least 1 A* - G	46.2%	66.7%	57.1%	52.9%	47.4%
GCSE: Attained 5 or more A* - G	43.2%	33.3%	57.1%	41.2%	31.6%
GCSE: Attained 5 or more A* - C	5.4%	11.1%	14.3%	11.8%	5.3%
GCSE: Attained 5 or more A* - C inc Eng. & Maths	new	new	7.1%	11.8%	5.3%

## 7) CLA health data

(Clients looked after for over a year)	31 Mar 2011	31 Aug 2011	30 Nov 2011
Health Checks of CLA	90%	79%	85%
Dental Checks of CLA	92%	73%	73%
Health / Dental Checks of CLA (old PAF C19)	91%	76%	79%

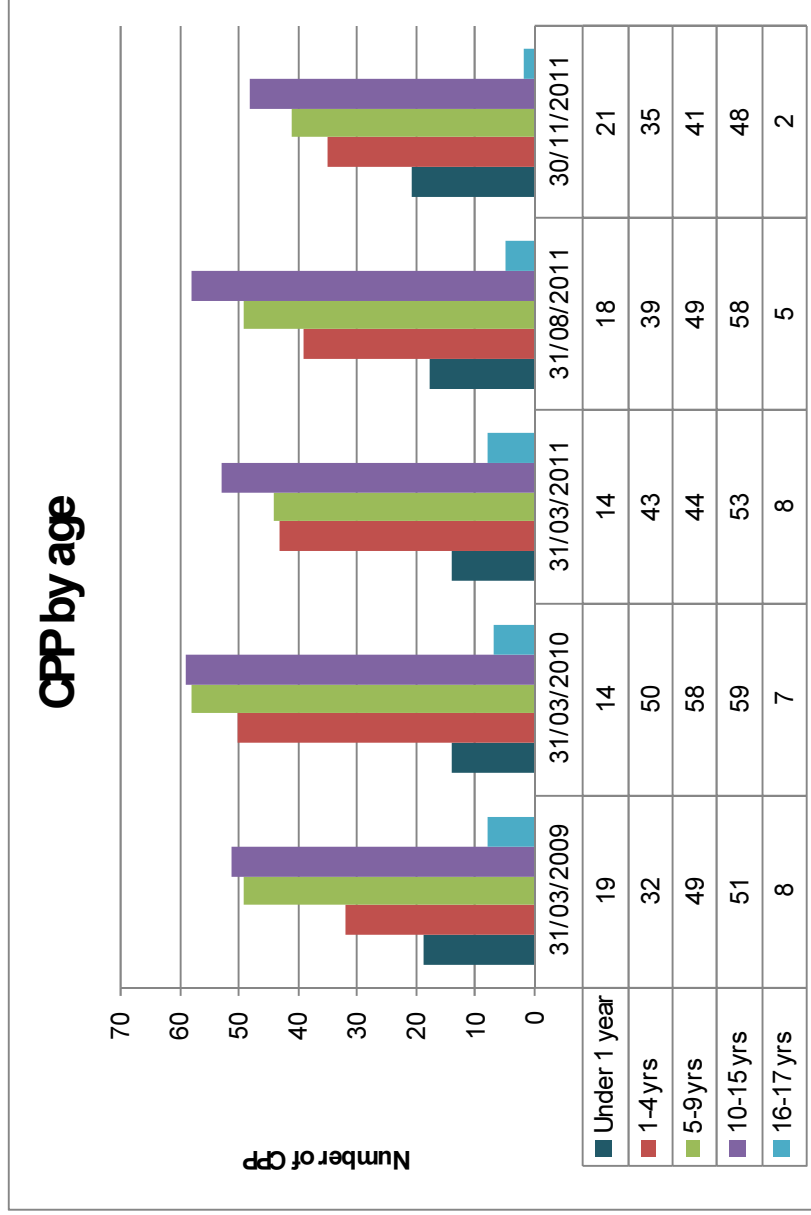
## 8) CLA - Other Data

	31 May 2010	31 Aug 2010	30 Nov 2010	31 Jan 2011	31 Aug 2011	30 Nov 2011
Number of children placed out of borough:	68	81	70	71	74	85
Of those, who are placed more than 20 miles:	28	31	32	33	31	30
Social Work Allocation:	100%	100%	100%	100%	99.7%	98.0%
Adoptions & Special Guardianship Orders: (our target for adoptions is 14)	13 for 2009-10	15 to date	16 to date	19 for 2010-11	5 to date	6 to date

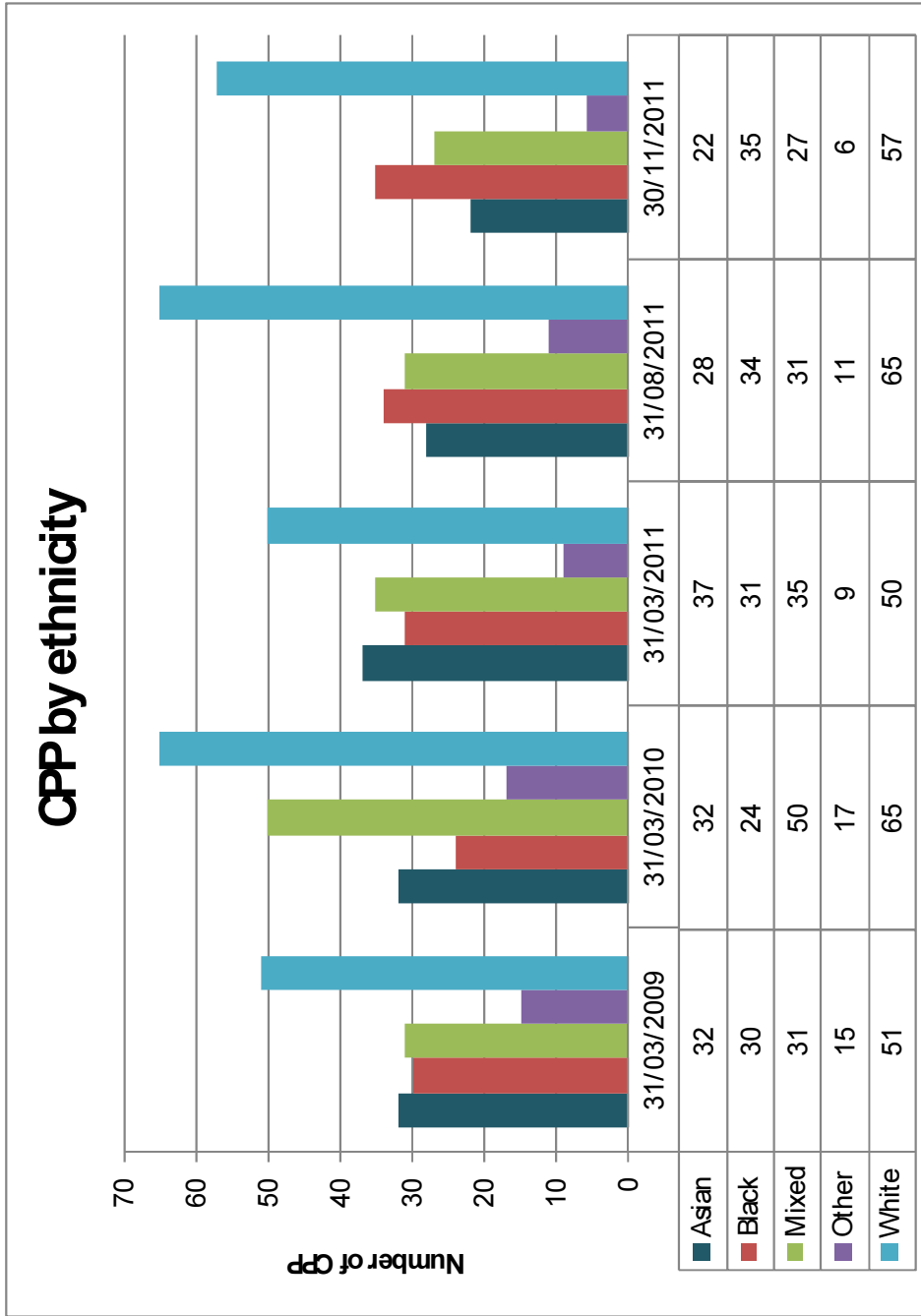
## Part B: Children Subject to a Child Protection Plan (CPP)

There were 147 children who were subject to a Child Protection Plan in Harrow on 30 November 2011.

### 9) CPP by Age

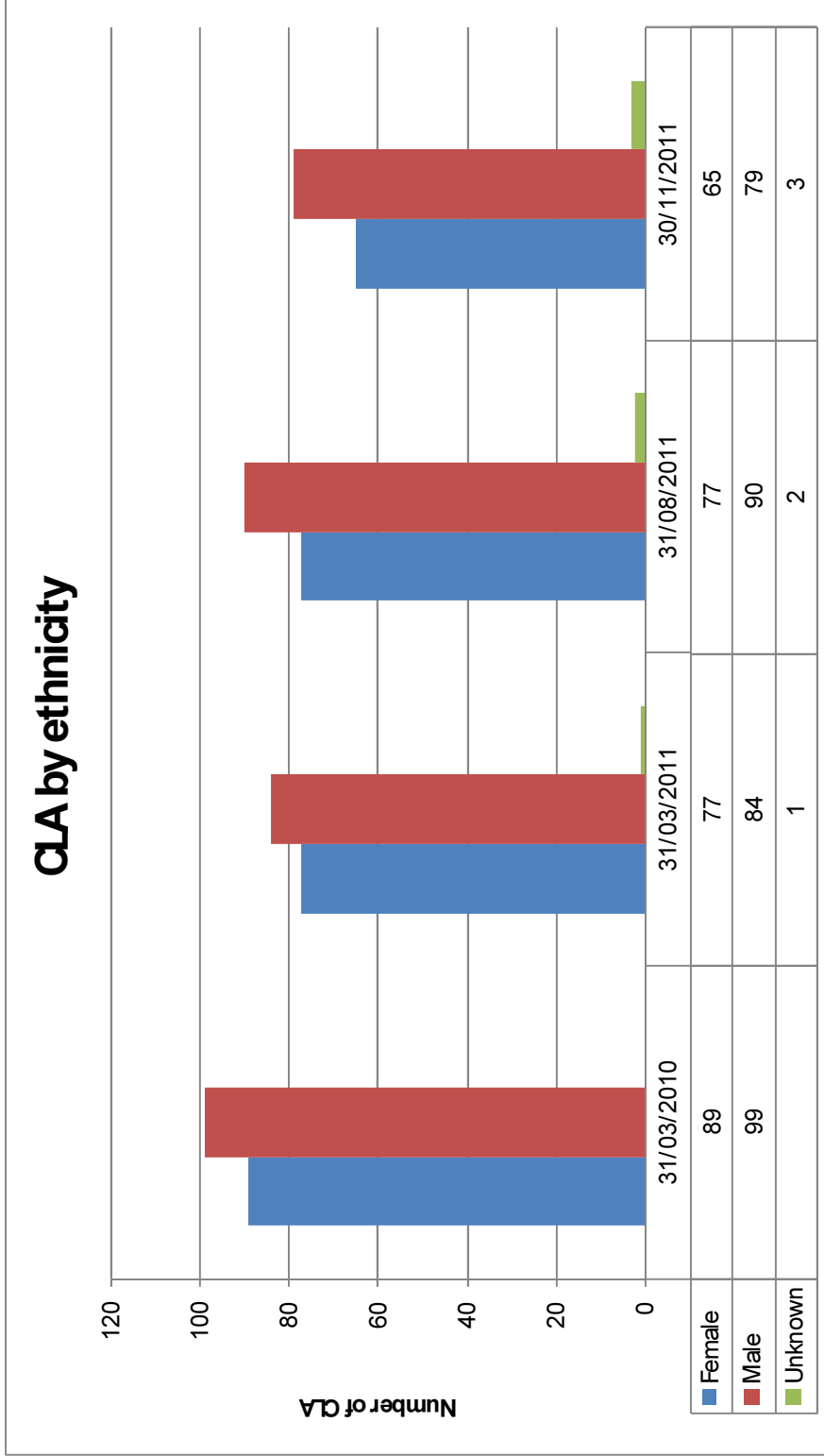


**10) CPP by ethnicity**

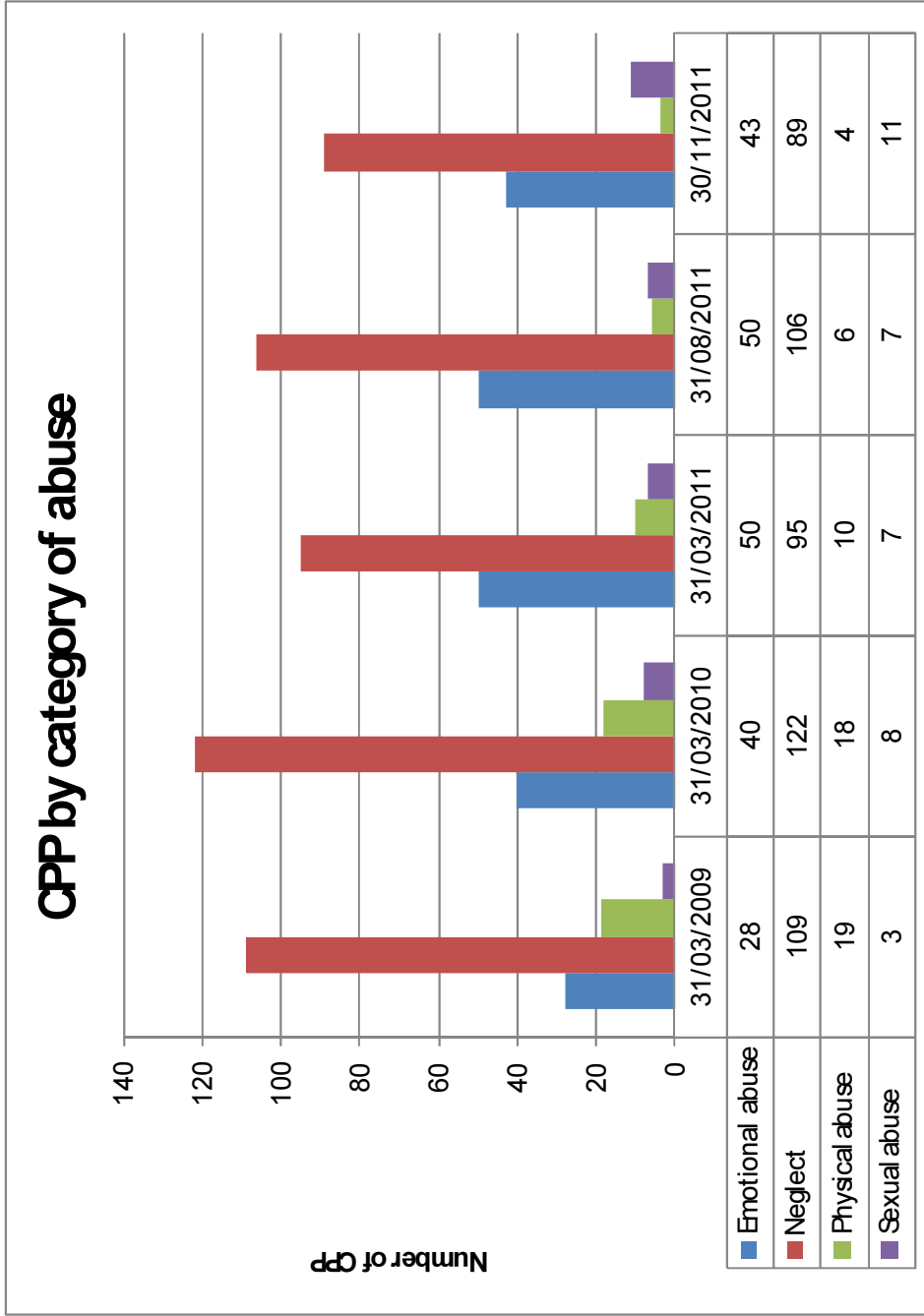




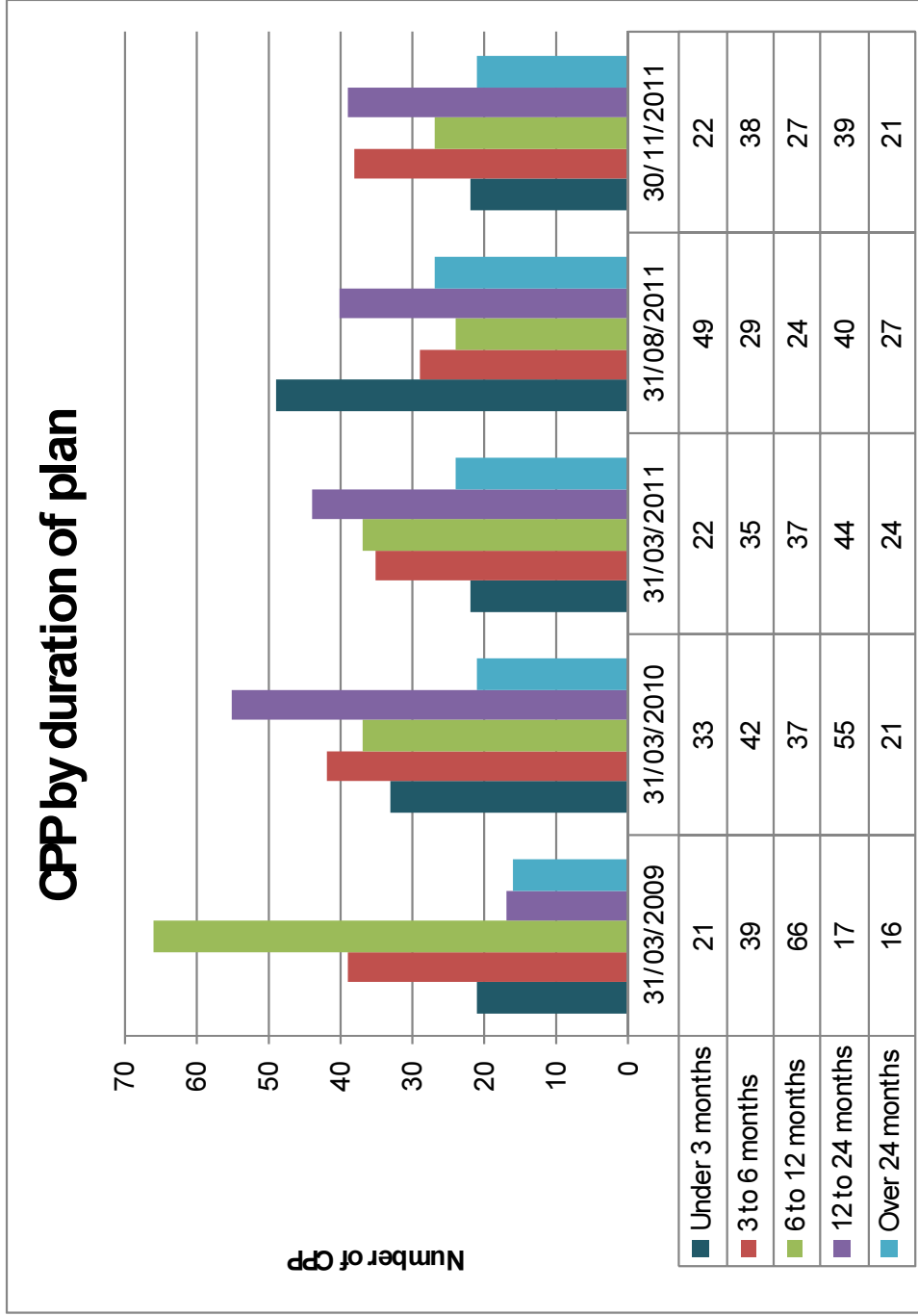
**11) CPP by gender**



**12) CPP by Category of Abuse**

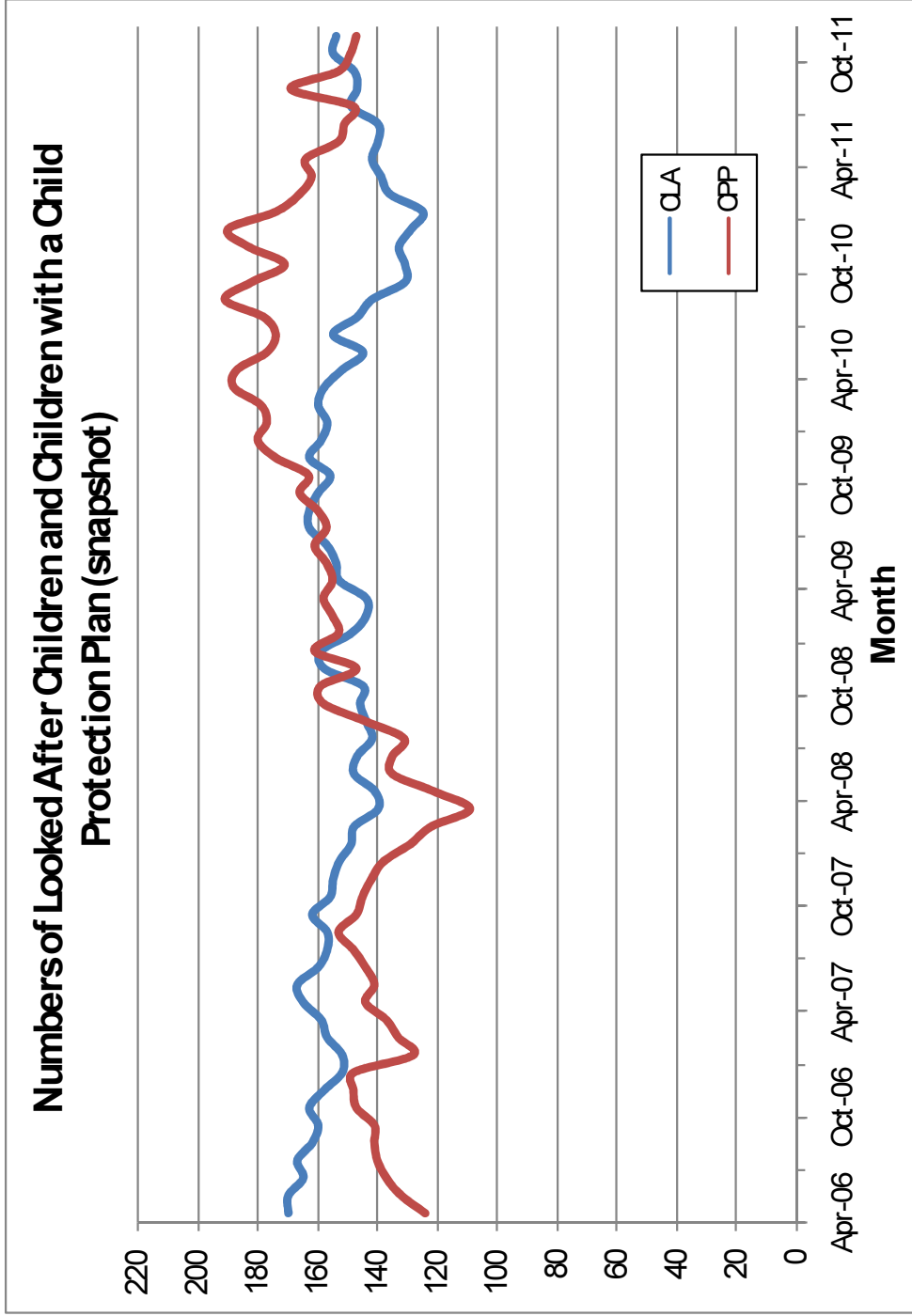


**13) CPP by duration of plan**



**Part C: Additional Information**

**14) Numbers of CLA & CPP**



## 15) Key Performance Indicators for Q2 2011 (September)

Prev. NI Ref.	Indicator Description	Polarity	Harrow actual 2010/11	Harrow target 2011/12	Harrow actual Q1 2011/12	Harrow actual Q2 2011/12	RAG Status Q2	Commentary Q2
	Numbers of children with CPP for over 2 years	▼	New	22 (Q1) 20 (Q2) 18 (Q3) 16 (Q4) (prov)	28	20	LG	
60	(PAF C64) Timing of Core Assessments (NI 60)	▲	80.50%	83%	92.11%	88.75%	HG	
61	Stability of LAC adopted following an agency decision	▲	83.30%	80%	100%	100%	HG	
62	(BV49) PAF A1 Stability of Placements of CLA	▼	15%	2.75%(Q1) 5.5% (Q2) 8.25%(Q3) 11% Annual	2.86%	10.81%	HR	<b>Headline:</b> Increase in Placement Instability. <b>Context:</b> Continued success with adoptions leaves an older and less stable cohort which puts pressure on stability indicators. Some children have had moves due to emergency or time limited placements. 9 out of 16 children with 3+ moves are teenagers. <b>Action:</b> Review of Teenage Placement Strategy, more robust scrutiny & tracking of placement moves & Review Individual Placement Support Plans.
63	PAF D78 Long term stability of CLA (2.5 years) (NI 63)	▲	66.70%	68%	69.23%	65.00%	A	
64	(PAF C21) Duration on the Child Protection Register	↔	17.20%	12%	16.28%	20.69%	HR	<b>Headline:</b> We continue not to be on target. A coordinated strategy is in place. <b>Context:</b> Following the Peter Connelly case the rise of Child Protection activity may have contributed to an increase in this indicator. However, the number of plans are now falling without a similar decrease in the indicator. <b>Action:</b> Challenge panels will be convened to look at children with Child Protection plans of 15 months plus. Child Protection Advisors will be actively involved in the planning of Child Protection work at key milestones and the role of the Core Groups will be strengthened to ensure that the Child Protection plan is progressed between reviews.
65	(PAF A3) Re-registrations on the CP Register	↔	8.80%	10%	0	10.26	A	
66	(PAF C68) Timeliness of Reviews of Looked After Children	▲	96.80%	100%	100%	99%	A	



Percentage of Children Looked After with permanent exclusions amongst school age Children Looked After, in quarter	▶	New	0%	0	0%	HG	Headline: New indicator - All CLA in school - Fixed term exclusions are high. Context: This is a new local indicator, and there is no bench marking data. Provisional targets have been set at quarterly intervals & relate to the academic year & therefore have a different order. In the first month of the new academic year we have had 3 children receiving fixed term exclusions. 1 from a Harrow Primary School, 2 secondary schools (Hillingdon & Herts). Action: An Education document is being prepared to work with schools regarding supporting CLA and preventing fixed term exclusions, data collection with neighbours would be required to look at identifying a suitable benchmark. A single VHT is being recruited in October to help address more effective focused communication with Schools for CLA.
Percentage of CLA with fixed term exclusions amongst school age CLA, in quarter	▶	New	15% (Q1) 1% (Q2) 5% (Q3) 10%(Q4)	6.49% (Summer term only against target of 5%)	4.91%	HR	
Percentage of sessions absent from school amongst school age CLA, in school year to date	▶	New	12% (YTD - prov)	14.47%	12.55%	A	Headline: New Local indicator - All CLA in school - Overall absence rate is considerably high. Context: This is a local indicator and data quality issues have been identified this is due to changes in the cohort with placement moves, this is being addressed, there are 3 children who may be impacting on the performance. Action: Data clean up is required to address this information, one child is no longer CLA, the other is in a secure unit and engaging with school and the other is receiving home tuition.
Percentage of children with an Initial CP conference within 15 working days of strategy discussion	▶	82.90%	90%	100%	97.65%	A	

<b>RAG Status</b>	
<b>HR</b>	Needs prompt attention
<b>LR</b>	Poor
<b>A</b>	Adequate
<b>LG</b>	Good
<b>HG</b>	Excellent

This page is intentionally left blank



**REPORT FOR: CORPORATE  
PARENTING PANEL**

---

<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	10 January 2012
<b>Subject:</b>	Housing for Children Looked After who are Leaving Local Authority Care
<b>Key Decision:</b>	No
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	Catherine Doran Corporate Director of Children's Services
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	Councillor Mitzi Green
<b>Exempt:</b>	No
<b>Decision subject to Call-in:</b>	Yes
<b>Enclosures:</b>	None

**Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations**

- This report seeks to inform the Corporate Parenting Panel about issues relating to housing support for children looked after who are leaving local authority care.
- Panel members are invited to consider recommendations contained in section 3.19 and give guidance on subsequent Cabinet or Portfolio Holder decision making arrangements.

## **Section 2 – Report**

### **Introduction**

Children looked after (CLA) and young people who are leaving care (care leavers) that have entitlement to housing support are invited to bid for accommodation under the Locata Housing Scheme in order that they can be housed at the point that they leave local authority care.

2.1 When CLA are 18 years old they become a care leaver and are no longer in the care of the local authority. In accordance with duties outlined in the Leaving Care Act 2000, care leavers are entitled to receive local authority housing support.

2.2 Care leavers are entitled to housing accommodation under Band B of the Locata Housing Scheme operated by Harrow Council Housing Department. The Housing Department have 22 allocated properties for care leavers in 2011. However, there has been a significant increase in demand for eligible properties for care leavers over recent years.

2.3 In 2012 it is expected that 38 care leavers will be eligible for housing under the Locata Housing Scheme. This means that 16 care leavers will be unable to be offered the opportunity of securing permanent housing as per the Children Act 1989 as amended, as demand is currently in excess of the allocation limit.

2.4 In order to prioritise the housing needs of CLA and Care Leavers and Housing Group has been established as a sub group to the CLA Life Chances Forum. This has relied and the positive relationship between Children's Services and the Housing Department. The CLA Life Chances Forum is a multi agency group of practitioners and senior professionals chaired by the CLA Service Manager, who is also an officer member of the Corporate Parenting Panel.

2.5 The terms of reference for the CLA Life Chances Forum focus on improving the life chances and outcomes for CLA. The focus of the Care Leavers and Housing Sub Group is to scrutinise current processes, maximise the benefit of local partnerships and address specific issues to improve housing outcomes for care leavers. An integral aspect of this work will be to ascertain the views, wishes and feelings of CLA and care leavers.

2.6 Representatives of the Care Leavers and Housing Sub Group include the following;

- CLA Service Manager
- Children's Placement Service Manager
- Leaving Care Team Manager
- Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children Team Manager
- Youth Offending Team Manager
- Children with Disabilities Team Manager
- Harrow Foster Carer's Association
- Adult Care Services

- Housing Department
- “Beyond Limits” Child in Care Council
- Independent Visitor Scheme

## Options considered

### 3.0 Issues

#### 3.1 Consultation with Care Leavers

The Leaving Care Team have issued questionnaires to all care leavers aged 18 years + who are living in their own tenancy. The questionnaire seeks to ascertain care leaver’s views regarding the allocation and suitability of accommodation under the Locata Housing Scheme..

#### 3.3 Increased demand

There has been a significant increase of teenage CLA aged 15 to 18 years old in Harrow’s looked after population. There are a number of factors that have contributed to this increase and the Teenage Placement Strategy (TPS) is a targeted attempt at addressing the range of issues that having an impact on Children’s Services ability to manage services in an efficient and effective manner. The Locata Housing Scheme is an important aspect of the TPS.

#### 3.4 Homelessness

Legislation regarding homeless 16 - 18 year olds has had an impact on local services. Following the Southwark Judgement in 2009, which was issued to Local Authorities in 2010, Authorities have been reminded about the need to ensure that 16 – 18 year olds have a full assessment of need and support for education, employment, health and finance, including accommodation.

3.5 Harrow is expected to accommodate any homeless young person (aged 16 – 18 years old) under section 20 of the Children Act 1989 where it is assessed that they are a child in need whenever it is determined that the young person has nowhere else to reside and no appropriate adult to care for them. There is a joint Housing and Children’s Services Protocol outlining detailed procedures for responding to the needs of vulnerable 16 and 17 year olds.

#### 3.6 Life Skills Programme and the Readiness Assessment

Previously the local practice was to defer referring care leavers for permanent housing until they were ready to manage and maintain their own tenancy. In practice this often delayed timely transitions and ultimately increased CLA placement costs. A great deal of work has been undertaken to review the way that CLA are supported to acquire the necessary life skills in order to be able to make a successful transition to young adulthood.

3.7 In order to ensure that all care leavers are ready to live independently a tenancy once they turn 18 years old, a new Life Skills Programme has been developed with teenage CLA, care leavers and a range of partners during 2011. The new Life Skills Programme, which will be launched in January 2012, provides an individual programme tailored to meet the unique needs and circumstances of all care leavers.

3.8 The Life Skills Programme will focus on the timely acquisition of appropriate life skills for all care leavers. This includes a readiness assessment for a broad range of issues, including appropriate practical skills, emotional resilience and well-being needs, support requirements and the type of education, employment and training conditions that will support a successful transition to young adulthood, including managing and maintaining a tenancy.

### **3.9 Locata Housing Scheme Nominations**

Prior to making a Locata nomination, Social Workers will need to evidence that CLA have successfully completed a Life Skills Programme and that an assessment of their readiness has indicated that a Locata nomination is appropriate. This assessment of readiness will include a detailed review of an up to date Pathway Plan.

3.10 The Social Worker, with the assistance of other relevant adults where appropriate (eg; Foster Carer, Residential Worker or Independent Visitor), will support care leavers with their Locata application and once nominated the care leaver will be accompanied to view any suitable properties that they are intending to bid for.

### **3.11 Housing Options**

Existing care leavers who are entitled to housing under the Locata Housing Scheme should be supported immediately however, as there has been a significant increase in the demand for single occupancy one bed social housing accommodation, there is a shortage of these types of properties. If the Housing Department increase the quota for care leavers this will have a real and immediate impact on the availability of available properties for other vulnerable groups including homeless people.

3.12 Alternative housing options may now need to be considered in order to address the current position. Consideration may need to be given to moving into the privately rented sector in order to develop partnerships with Registered Social Landlords (RSLs). There are however, concerns that such a move pose the risk of developing less secure tenancies and more expensive rents than would ordinarily be enjoyed in the social housing sector.

3.13 Although care leavers are provided with advice and support regarding appropriate benefits and entitlements, benefits legislation is frequently changing and can be difficult system to navigate and entitlements will be affected.

### **3.14 Setting up Grant**

Concern has been expressed about the quality and decorative state of some properties that have been allocated under the Locata Housing Scheme. The Housing Department provides a standard one off decoration payment of £206 to meet the costs of decoration expenses in a one bed flat. Care leavers are not currently included in the group of new tenants who have their flat decorated by the Council's contractors at the higher cost of £585. This service currently applies to elderly and disabled tenants.

3.15 At present care leavers usually purchase essential items from the Independent Living Grant (ILG). In reality the ILG does not cover the costs of

all essential items and this creates significant difficulties for care leavers attempting to set up home.

3.16 Children's Services has developed a list of essential items that will be provided to care leavers as part of a scheme to alleviate some of the additional pressures associated with setting up home. These essential items include a cooker, fridge/freezer, and washing machine.

### **3.17 Ongoing support for Care Leavers**

Children's Services has a dedicated Leaving Care Team to provide support to care leavers aged 18 years and over. In addition to Leaving Care Team staff care leavers enjoy continued support from foster carers, residential care staff and independent visitors who maintain enduring relationships and support after CLA turn 18 years old.

3.18 Under the Children Act 1989, as amended the Local Authority continues to have responsibility for providing certain types of support for care leavers up to the age of 25 years if they continue to be in full time higher education. This support is equivalent to the type of support that any young person may reasonably expect from a caring parent.

## **3.19 Proposed Recommendations**

The Corporate Parenting Panel are asked to consider the following recommendations in order to address the Council's corporate parenting responsibilities for care leavers as it relates to housing support;

- a) To increase the Locata Housing Scheme allocation for care leavers from 22 to 38 in 2012 and to review future demand on an annual basis in line with the regular corporate planning cycle
- b) To provide a view about the financial assistance that should be provided by the Council to enable care leavers to set up home
- c) To provide a steer about the pro's and con's of exploring opportunities in the privately rented sector in order to develop partnerships with Registered Social Landlords as a way of addressing current housing resource pressures for care leavers
- d) To support the collective endeavours of the Care Leavers and Housing Sub Group of the CLA Life Chances Forum and task them with the responsibility for developing clear operational systems and processes for monitoring and reviewing how the housing needs and circumstances of care leavers will be addressed by the Council
- e) To note the questionnaire feed back from care leavers regarding the suitability and provision of housing provided under the Locata Housing Scheme in order to establish a minimum quality standard in the future

## **Environmental Impact**

There is no specific environmental impact from the issues outlined in this report.

## **Financial Implications**

Care leavers are entitled to claim housing benefit from 18 years old in order to cover the costs of their rent. Where care leavers remain in placements beyond their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, rather than accessing their own tenancy and housing benefits, it presents a significant financial cost to the Council. The recent reductions made to leaving care placement costs have relied upon an adequate supply of suitable accommodation for those leaving care. Over the next few years there is a bulge of young people leaving care. The risk is that if suitable housing can not be identified young people will remain longer in high cost placements, such as semi independent placements. If the lack of accommodation results in a 6 months delay in leaving care, based on the current cohort of CLA, it is estimated to result in a budget pressure in excess of £0.5m.

3.22 Care leavers with additional support needs, for example a learning disability, mental illness or substance misuse, will require input from adult care services. In these cases the existence of an effective Transition Protocol between Children's and Adult Care Services is essential in order that appropriate targeted and specialist care can be provided. In many instances the nature and level of the care leaver's additional needs will have an impact on their ability to manage and maintain their own tenancy and it will be critical to ensure that appropriate arrangements, including funding, are in place.

## **Risk Management Implications**

All related risks are recorded in the Children's Services risk register. There is a significant reputational risk from a poor inspection of social care, in particular any serious or untoward significant incident concerning a care leaver. Preparations are in place to mitigate this risk.

## **Equalities implications**

CLA and care leavers are additionally vulnerable child in need. The 2009 statutory guidance "The Roles & Responsibilities of the Lead Member for Children's Services and the Director of Children's Services" highlights the need for Local Authorities to work corporately to improve the well-being of looked after children and young people leaving care, to make their needs a priority and seek the same outcomes that any reasonable caring parent would want for their own children. CLA consistently fare worse than their peers across a range of indicators including health, education, training, employment, homelessness and offending.

## **Corporate Priorities**

CLA and care leavers are additionally vulnerable by virtue of the experiences that led them into Local Authority care and in respect of the poor outcomes that many CLA and care leavers experience when compared to their peers,

The Council's corporate priorities include providing care and protection to those who are most in need and this includes CLA and care leavers.

### **Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance**

Name: Emma Stabler	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer
Date: 9 December 2011		
Name: Helen Ottino	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Monitoring Officer
Date: 9 December 2011		

### **Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers**

**Contact:** Peter Tolley, Service Manager, Family Placement Service & Nick Crick, Service Manager, Children in Need & Looked After Service

**Background Papers:** None

This page is intentionally left blank



**REPORT FOR: CORPORATE  
PARENTING PANEL**

---

<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	10 January 2012
<b>Subject:</b>	Display for Councillors
<b>Key Decision:</b>	No
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	Catherine Doran, Corporate Director of Children's Services
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	Councillor Mitzi Green, Portfolio Holder for Children's Services
<b>Exempt:</b>	No
<b>Decision subject to Call-in:</b>	Yes
<b>Enclosures:</b>	None

**Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations**

This report sets a proposal for publicising the work of Corporate Parenting and Beyond Limits (Harrow's Children in Care Council).

**Recommendation:** that

- The Panel request the Corporate Director of Children's Services to set up a display for Councillors - by members of Corporate Parenting and Beyond Limits - at a time that full Council meet in order to engage all Councillors;
- This year's display to be set up prior to the 12 April Council meeting;
- Corporate Parenting considers other means by which to engage Councillors in the needs of children looked after.

**Reason: (For recommendation)**

There is an expectation on Local Authorities from the white paper, 'Care Matters-Time for Change, 2007' and subsequent legislation that councillors understand their corporate parenting responsibilities towards children in care and are committed to fulfilling them.

Corporate Parenting Panel has a pivotal role in promoting the needs of children looked after

## **Section 2 – Report**

### **Background**

In September 1998 Frank Dobson, the then Secretary of State for Health, wrote to all councillors to launch Quality Protects, a five-year programme to transform children's services, underlining their vital role in driving forward the initiative. This launched the concept of corporate parenting and placed collective responsibility on all local authorities to achieve good parenting for all children in the public care. It requires ownership and leadership at a senior level and includes all elected members.

Following on from the plans set out in the white paper, 'Care Matters – A time for Change, 2007', the Children and Young Persons Act, 2008, placed a number of requirements upon Local Authorities and Elected Members, the aim being to improve outcomes for children in care and their families, with corporate parenting, and listening to the views of children and young people being key elements.

There is rolling programme of officer led induction training for Councillors in relation to their Corporate Parenting responsibilities

In addition, members of Corporate Parenting have participated in training events with children looked after which have also been attended by the wider Councillor group.

However, the Cabinet approval of the establishment of Beyond Limits on 18<sup>th</sup> November 2010, together with their terms of reference and the Harrow Pledge to children looked after, provides a further opportunity to consider a wider engagement with other Councillors.

The setting up of an annual display is seen as one of a number of initiatives by Corporate Parenting, together with Beyond Limits to promote the needs of children looked after with the wider Councillor group.

There was a very successful display prior the April Council meeting in 2011. Young people represented by Beyond Limits and Young Voices interacted with Members, and with assistance from Panel and the Participation Officers

for children looked children after promoted the work of both Panel and Beyond Limits.

## Options considered

None

## Implications of the Recommendation

Approval of the recommendations will provide one of a number of possible means of highlighting both the needs of children looked after and the corporate parenting responsibilities of elected members.

## Financial Implications

The financial cost for any printing and leaflets is being met by way of the Care Matters grant which is within the base budget held by the Divisional Director, Targeted Services, Children's Services. No additional cost is anticipated.

## Risk Management Implications

Risk included on Directorate risk register? **No**

Separate risk register in place? **No**

## Corporate Priorities

The corporate priority this report incorporates is:

- Improve support for vulnerable people

It will provide an opportunity to engage the wider Councillor group with the needs of children looked after and their responsibilities as Corporate Parents.

## Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Name: Emma Stabler	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer
Date: 9 December 2011		
Name: Helen Ottino	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Monitoring Officer
Date: 9 December 2011		

## **Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers**

**Contact:** Andreas Kyriacou, Quality Assurance Manager, Vulnerable Children [andreas.kyriacou@harrow.gov.uk](mailto:andreas.kyriacou@harrow.gov.uk)

**Background Papers:** None

**REPORT FOR: CORPORATE  
PARENTING PANEL**

---

**Date of Meeting:** 10 January 2012

**Subject:** **INFORMATION REPORT –  
Corporate Parenting Panel Work  
Programme 2011/12**

**Responsible Officer:** Hugh Peart, Director of Legal and  
Governance Services, Catherine  
Doran, Corporate Director of Children’s  
Services

**Exempt:** No

**Enclosures:** Appendix 1 - Corporate Parenting  
Panel Work Programme 2011/12

**Section 1 – Summary**

This report sets out the Work Programme for the Corporate Parenting Panel for the municipal year 2011/12.

**FOR INFORMATION**

## **Section 2 – Report**

1. A Work Programme has been devised to provide all Members of the Panel the opportunity to contribute towards the report setting process and to provide an overview of the work conducted previously and future work to be undertaken.
2. The agreed Work Programme does not preclude any further items being presented to future meetings of the Panel if it is required.
3. The agreed Work Programme is contained in Appendix 1.

## **Section 3 – Further Information**

4. All relevant information is included in the report.

## **Section 4 – Financial Implications**

5. None associated with this specific report.

## **Section 5 – Equalities implications**

6. The Work Programme does not have any equality implications.

## **Section 6 – Corporate Priorities**

7. Adopting a Work Programme for the Corporate Parenting Panel will contribute towards the Council's corporate priority of supporting and protecting people who are most in need.

Name: Emma Stabler	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer
Date: 14 December 2011		

## **Section 7 - Contact Details and Background Papers**

**Contact:** Mark Doherty, Democratic Services Officer, 020 8416 8050

**Background Papers:** None

## Appendix 1: Corporate Parenting Panel Work Programme 2011/2012

DATE OF MEETING	Final reports to Democratic Services	Report title and purpose	Report Author
Tuesday 12 July 2011	Friday 24 June 2011	<p>1) Information Report - Activity and Performance</p> <p>2) Information report - Leaving Care (about how we help the transition to independence and the management information we use to inform us about outcomes for CLA. To also include how we deal with the change of CLA status to supported lodgings and impact on young people)</p> <p>3) Information Report - Asylum Seekers (The support we provide Asylum Seekers, particularly around education and better outcomes)</p>	<p>David Harrington</p> <p>Nick Crick/Philip Ishola/Peter Tolley</p> <p>Philip Ishola</p>
Monday 3 October 2011	Wednesday 21 September 2011	<p>1) Information Report- Activity and Performance. To include analysis of GSCE results.</p> <p>2) Annual Report Fostering and Adoption. To include analysis of targets set and outcomes</p> <p>3) Annual report on complaints and advocacy, children looked after. To include analysis of issues raised and areas of learning</p> <p>4) Verbal feedback on Celebration of Children Looked After Achievements</p>	<p>David Harrington</p> <p>Peter Tolley</p> <p>Stuart Dalton</p> <p>Peter Tolley /Beyond Limits</p>

<p><b>Tuesday 10 January 2012</b></p>	<p>Friday 9 December 2011</p>	<p>1) Information Report- Activity and Performance 2) Verbal Update - stall for Members - Full Council 3) Information Report - housing for young people leaving care</p>	<p><b>David Harrington Andreas Peter Tolley</b></p>
<p><b>Tuesday 3 April 2012</b></p>	<p>Wednesday 21 March 2012</p>	<p>1) Information Report- Activity and Performance 2) Information Report - IRO Report</p>	<p><b>David Harrington Andreas</b></p>