

**Full Council - Wednesday, 28 February 2018**

**Written Question from Mr Richard Hards of Whippingham to Cllr Paul Brading - Cabinet Member for Children's Service's**

"You will probably recall His Honour Sir James Munby, President of the Family Division and Head of Family Justice, saying that, since the death penalty was abolished, the worst thing that we ask judges to do now is to remove children from their families.

The number of children in care on the Isle of Wight is disproportionately much higher than other local authorities and is bordering double the rate for Hampshire.

At a recent Policy and Scrutiny Committee for Children's Services, Stuart Ashley, Assistant Director – Children and Families, explained that the number was higher than it should be for the Isle of Wight because, prior to Hampshire County Council's take over in 2013, the IoW Children's Services was a failing service and that poor safeguarding practice at that time had resulted in more children being taken from their families than would have been the case had the service been operating as it should have been.

Therefore, reflecting upon His Honour James Munby's comment and the harm inflicted upon children taken from their families unnecessarily, will the Council now apologise to those children and their families for the grief they have had to endure because of the Council's failings?"

## **RESPONSE**

*"Thank you for the question. As the council will know, we have taken steps to ensure that our safeguarding services remain safe and effective and to that end cabinet agreed to an extension of the partnership with Hampshire County Council for the next five years. That we have more children in care than the statistical average does not necessarily mean, of course that any individual decision that was taken was incorrect. All decisions to take a child in to care are now overseen by senior managers and, in the majority of cases, by the court system."*