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Monitor Officer
Christopher Potter

County Hall, Newport, Isle of Wight PO30 1UD
Telephone (01983) 821000

Agenda

Name of meeting	POLICY AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES, EDUCATION AND SKILLS
Date	THURSDAY 15 JUNE 2023
Time	5.00 PM
Venue	COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNTY HALL, NEWPORT, ISLE OF WIGHT
Members of the committee	Cllrs R Quigley (Chairman), S Ellis (Vice-Chairman), D Adams, R Downer, S Hendry, J Lever and N Stuart
Co-opted Members	R Saunders

Democratic Services Officer: Sarah Philipsborn
democratic.services@iow.gov.uk

1. **Apologies and Changes in Membership (If Any)**

To note any changes in membership of the Committee made in accordance with Part 4B paragraph 5 of the Constitution.

2. **Minutes** (Pages 7 - 12)

To confirm as a true record the Minutes of the meeting held on 2 March 2023.

3. **Declarations of Interest**

To invite Members to declare any interest they might have in the matters on the agenda.



Details of this and other Council committee meetings can be viewed on the Isle of Wight Council's Committee [website](#). This information may be available in alternative formats on request. Please note the meeting will be audio recorded and the recording will be placed on the website (except any part of the meeting from which the press and public are excluded). Young people are welcome to attend Council meetings however parents/carers should be aware that the public gallery is not a supervised area.

4. **Public Question Time - 15 Minutes Maximum**

Questions may be asked without notice but to guarantee a full reply at the meeting, a question must be put including the name and address of the questioner by delivery in writing or by electronic mail to Democratic Services at democratic.services@iow.gov.uk, no later than two clear working days before the start of the meeting. Therefore the deadline for written questions will be Monday 12 June 2023.

Members of the public are invited to make representations to the Committee regarding its workplan, either in writing at any time or at a meeting under this item.

5. **Progress on outcomes and recommendations from previous meetings**
(Pages 13 - 14)

The Chairman to report on progress with actions agreed at previous meetings.

6. **Performance and Budget** (Pages 15 - 38)

To consider the impact on current performance trends and funding of Children's Services after the budget has been set for 2023/24

7. **Fostering Annual Report 2022-2023** (Pages 39 - 54)

To consider the annual report with respect to fostering on the Isle of Wight

8. **Adoption Annual Report 2022-23** (Pages 55 - 132)

To consider the annual report with respect to adoption on the Isle of Wight

9. **Children's Social Care Review** (Pages 133 - 146)

To consider the implications of the Independent Review of Children's Social Care

10. **SACRE Annual Report 2021-2022** (Pages 147 - 162)

To consider the work of the Standing Advisory Committee for Religious Education

11. **Committee's Work Plan** (Pages 163 - 166)

To consider any amendments to the committee's current workplan.

12. **Members' Question Time**

To guarantee a reply to a question, a question must be submitted in writing or by electronic mail to democratic.services@iow.gov.uk no later than 5pm on Tuesday, 13 June 2023. A question may be asked at the meeting without prior notice but in these circumstances, there is no guarantee that a full reply will be given at the meeting.

CHRISTOPHER POTTER
Monitoring Officer
Wednesday, 7 June 2023

Interests

If there is a matter on this agenda which may relate to an interest you or your partner or spouse has or one you have disclosed in your register of interests, you must declare your interest before the matter is discussed or when your interest becomes apparent. If the matter relates to an interest in your register of pecuniary interests then you must take no part in its consideration and you must leave the room for that item. Should you wish to participate as a member of the public to express your views where public speaking is allowed under the Council's normal procedures, then you will need to seek a dispensation to do so. Dispensations are considered by the Monitoring Officer following the submission of a written request. Dispensations may take up to 2 weeks to be granted.

Members are reminded that it is a requirement of the Code of Conduct that they should also keep their written Register of Interests up to date. Any changes to the interests recorded on that form should be made as soon as reasonably practicable, and within 28 days of the change. A change would be necessary if, for example, your employment changes, you move house or acquire any new property or land.

If you require more guidance on the Code of Conduct or are unsure whether you need to record an interest on the written register you should take advice from the Monitoring Officer – Christopher Potter on (01983) 821000, email christopher.potter@iow.gov.uk, or Deputy Monitoring Officer - Justin Thorne on (01983) 821000, email justin.thorne@iow.gov.uk.

Notice of recording

Please note that all meetings that are open to the public and press may be filmed or recorded and/or commented on online by the council or any member of the public or press. However, this activity must not disrupt the meeting, and if it does you will be asked to stop and possibly to leave the meeting. This meeting may also be filmed for live and subsequent broadcast via a hosted internet site (except any part of the meeting from which the press and public are excluded).

If you wish to record, film or photograph the council meeting or if you believe that being filmed or recorded would pose a risk to the safety of you or others then please speak with the democratic services officer prior to that start of the meeting. Their contact details are on the agenda papers.

If the press and public are excluded for part of a meeting because confidential or exempt information is likely to be disclosed, there is no right to record that part of the meeting. All recording and filming equipment must be removed from the meeting room when the public and press are excluded.

If you require further information please see the council guide to reporting on council meetings which can be found at <http://www.iwight.com/documentlibrary/view/recording-of-proceedings-guidance-note>

All information that is recorded by the council is held in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018. For further information please contact Democratic Services at democratic.services@iow.gov.uk



Minutes

Name of meeting	POLICY AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES, EDUCATION AND SKILLS
Date and Time	THURSDAY 2 MARCH 2023 COMMENCING AT 5.00 PM
Venue	COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNTY HALL, NEWPORT, ISLE OF WIGHT
Present	Cllrs R Quigley (Chairman), J Lever (Vice-Chairman), R Downer, S Hendry, M Oliver and D Andre
Also Present	Steve Crocker, Brian Pope, Natalie Smith, Sarah Philipsborn, Paul Thistlewood, Andy Tickner and Melanie White
Apologies	Cllrs D Adams and S Ellis, Tig Outlaw and Rob Saunders

1. **Apologies and Changes in Membership (If Any)**

Apologies received from David Adams, Suzie Ellis, Tig Outlaw and Rob Saunders. Martin Oliver to substitute for David Adams.

2. **Minutes**

RESOLVED:

THAT the minutes of the meeting held on 1 December 2022 be approved.

3. **Declarations of Interest**

Cllr Stephen Hendry stated he was a School Governor for both Holy Cross and Queensgate Primary Schools. Cllr Martin Oliver stated he was a School Governor for St George's School.

4. **Public Question Time - 15 Minutes Maximum**

Two written questions received PQ 09/23 and PQ 10/23

5. **Progress on outcomes and recommendations from previous meetings**

The Chairman asked the Cabinet Member for Children's Education and skills for an update on school place planning. The Cabinet Member confirmed that the item was on the Forward Plan and that Cabinet would be reviewing strategic place planning at its meeting on 8 June 2023. Following this the Cabinet member stated she would report back to the committee.

Regarding the item on Young Carers, it was confirmed that the Carers Strategy 2023-28 had been circulated and there was nothing to be added.

6. **SEND Strategy and Safety Valve**

The Assistant Director, Education and Inclusion Hampshire County Council and Isle of Wight Council provided an introduction and suggested the committee should consider an annual update regarding the SEND strategy and Safety Valve Programme.

It was explained that during 2020/21 the Department of Education introduced the safety valve intervention programme for those local authorities with the very highest percentage Dedicated School Grant DSG deficits. The Isle of Wight Council had been invited to take part in the 2022/23 programme whereby the Council put in a safety valve bid into the DfE which would potentially deliver the additional finance needed for the future strategy for improving outcomes for children and young people with special educational needs.

The Assistant Director for Education and Inclusion gave a PowerPoint presentation on how children and young people with SEND on the Isle of Wight are getting an improving deal across education, health and care. It was affirmed that there was commitment across the sectors to drive improvements by working together to ensure that children's needs are identified early and that they receive the support they need.

It was highlighted that the Isle of Wight was doing well in this field and was consistently above the national performance indicators.

The Government Green Paper was warmly welcomed and the strategies the Island had chosen to follow had the objectives of supporting mainstream schools in their support children with special needs, as well as looking at the individual situations through the lens of the child. Strategies that were being developed by the local authority involved building capacity with SEN support guidance, tool kits, bespoke training, networks and termly meetings with advice givers.

There was also to be greater local authority involvement with a person-centred approach, making sure that EHCPs are reviewed annually and had tighter outcomes and sharply focused provision. All EHCPs were now electronic, though there needed to be a standardizing of EHCPs that would need to be addressed.

There was a commitment to continue with the EHCP process improvement with the roll out of the EHCP hub along with right sizing the financing of EHCPs through a banding system and increasing the number of SEN caseworkers.

There was the desire to reduce the number of Off Island placements and furthermore create a new special school funded under free school processes which would accommodate 75 places catering for both primary and secondary aged pupils. The Committee was told that a bid for the funding of this new school had just been granted by the DfE.

The presentation concluded with an overview of how children and young people with SEND are given provision for preparing for adulthood. This included an employability hub with supported internships and apprenticeships, and work with employers to broaden awareness.

Questions were asked regarding the amount of the deficit and write off, the shortage of SEN teachers and support staff, and the fact that the Government White Paper on education had been scrapped which had the effect of leaving the Green Paper to operate in isolation.

RESOLVED:

THAT the SEND Strategy and Safety Valve report be noted.

THAT the committee would monitor progress of the strategy and safety valve programme to ensure the different strands are being implemented.

7. Pathway into Further Education and Training

The County Education Manager (Interim) Participation and Lifelong Learning gave a presentation explaining the statutory position and the duties that the local authority had undertaken in the Post 16 Pathways to Education and training.

It was stated that it was the responsibility of the schools to provide a careers programme for their students across the full range of activities required by government guidance which was supported by the local authority.

The Isle of Wight performance in getting young people a guaranteed place in post 16 education was deemed as above the national average and ranked the highest within the South East Region. The transition of young people into education, employment and/or training was also deemed above the national average and SE average. All post 16 provision on the Island was rated Good by OFSTED, and it was stated all school and providers contributed significantly to the overall opportunities available.

With regards to the local economy, it was explained that the DfE had introduced Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIPS) to provide new technical education and skills priorities agreed in local areas, and this was to be led by the IOW Chamber of Commerce. The LSIP process was deemed as focusing on what the Island young people were asking for, what the island needed and what was available on the Island. It was also hoped that the Island would be at the vanguard of opportunities for young people with special needs and disabilities.

Questions were asked regarding the balance of educational and vocational training offered.

RESOLVED:

THAT the Pathway into Further Education and Training report be noted.

8. **School Attainment**

The County Manager for Education, Secondary and Post 16 gave a PowerPoint presentation providing a broad summary and analysis of attainment across Isle of Wight Schools in 2022 at the key points in children's and young people's education and the context that framed the summary and results.

The context was deemed as very important given that the impact of the pandemic varied across schools and attendance figures were below the national average. It was highlighted that Year 11 pupils who were absent for more than 10% of the time had an average of 3 grades lower than those with an attendance rate above 90%.

There was an increase in pupils experiencing disadvantage on the Island and it was stated that mental health and wellbeing needs of children and young people on the Island had also risen as a result of the pandemic. It was also highlighted that performance data for 2022 should not be directly compared with 2019 without this caveat.

Primary Attainment remained broadly in line with the national average although attainment at Key Stage 2 was below the national average in the key measures of reading, writing and mathematics combined. When these figures were further examined, they showed that Key Stage 2 reading had remained steady, mirroring the national situation, but Key Stage 2 writing had maths showed the greatest decline both on the Island and nationally.

The situation was being addressed with the introduction of a package of improvement points with a focus on a linked Year 6 project with significant governor involvement, as well as networks and the sharing of good practice.

It was explained that secondary attainment at the end of Key Stage 4 had increased on the Island for English and Maths at grade 4+ with stronger progress in English than in maths.

Progress had been seen in attainment 8 at the end of Key Stage 4 and the Ebacc results showed significant improvement, but both still lagged behind the national figures.

An extra slide was shown to the committee which demonstrated the correlation between attainment and deprivation.

The next steps for improvement in Secondary were shared with the committee with a significant co-ordinated attendance focus across the inclusion and school improvement services, focused project work on exam preparation and the sharing of good practice.

The presentation concluded with a focus on children and young people experiencing vulnerability. It was stated that the impact of the pandemic had been to widen educational inequalities both locally and nationally.

In order to address these education inequalities, school improvement work involving raising attainment for all was being undertaken, with a focus on looking at the issues through the lens of the child.

RESOLVED:

THAT the School Attainment report be noted.

9. **Committee's Work Plan**

The Work Plan was shared with the committee for comment.

10. **Members' Question Time**

None were received.

CHAIRMAN

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Policy and Scrutiny Committee for Children's Services, Education & Skills Scrutiny Committee - Progress on Actions & Outcomes

Meeting Date	Agreed Action	Responsibility	Update	Actioned
Outstanding Actions				
Actions Completed (Since Last Meeting)				
17 June 2021	Young Carers Support That the draft Isle of Wight Carers Strategy following a review be submitted to the Committee for comment before formal approval is given by the Cabinet.		New Carers Strategy was shared with the committee ahead of March Cabinet meeting for any comment to be fed back.	Mar-23
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Agenda Item Introduction

Committee	POLICY AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES, EDUCATION AND SKILLS
Date	15 JUNE 2023
Topic	PERFORMANCE AND BUDGET

BACKGROUND

Following the setting of the Council's budget for 2023/24 the committee requested an update on the impact on funding across Children's Services and Education as a whole.

FOCUS FOR SCRUTINY

- What are the budget headlines and what impact will this have on Children's Services and Education for the island?
- What is in place to counteract the impact of funding issues across Children's Services and Education on children and families?
- What happens if forecasted savings are not realised?
- What strategic plans are in place to ensure maximisation of the budget across Children's Services and Education?

APPROACH

Committee report to be provided.

APPENDICES ATTACHED

Children's Services Performance Quarter Four 2022/2023

Contact Point: Melanie White, Scrutiny Officer, ☎ 821000 ext 8876
e-mail melanie.white@iow.gov.uk

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Children's Services Performance Quarter Four 2022/2023

Stuart Ashley, Director Children's Services

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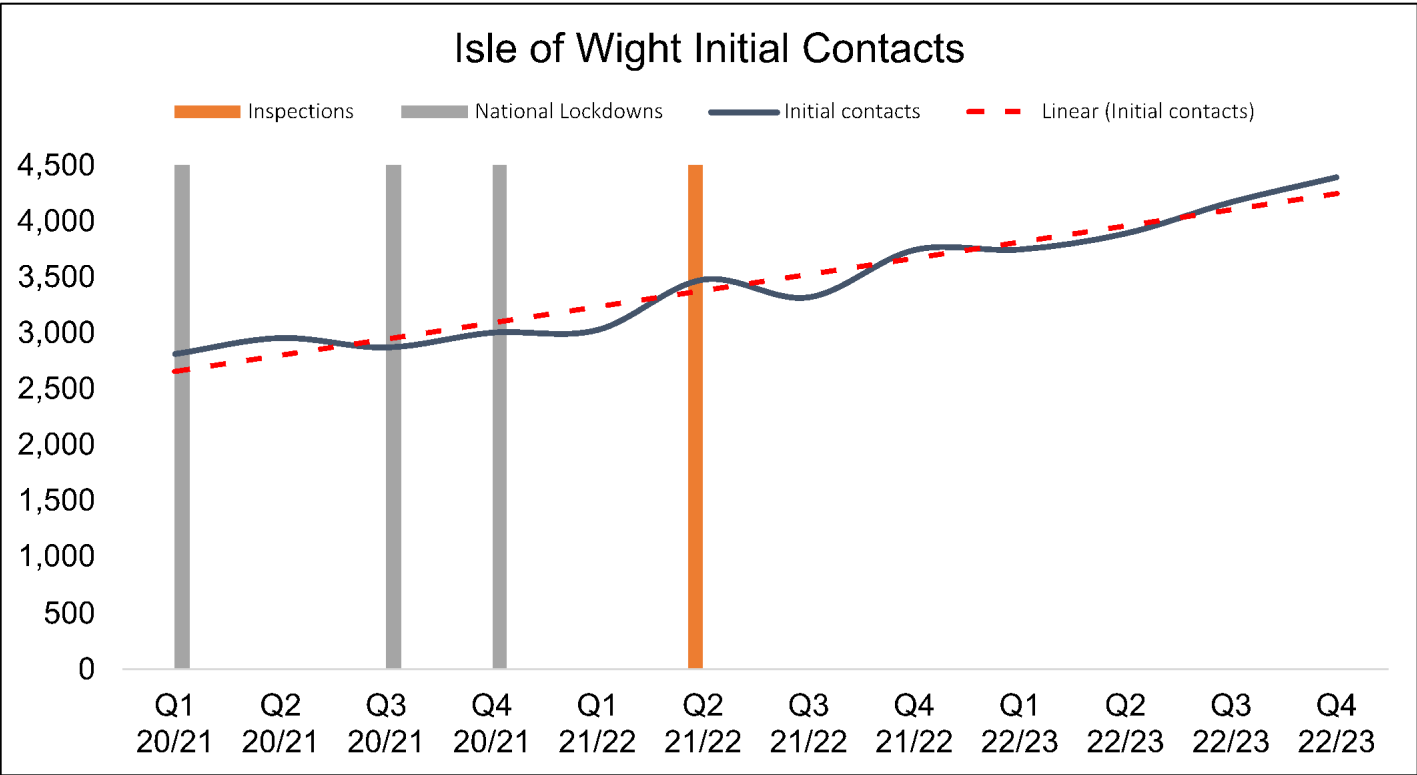
Appendix 1

C&F Headlines

- Demand continues to rise across social care and early help.
- There has been an improvement in recruitment and retention following an increase in the market supplement to the hardest to recruit to posts and development of senior social workers in Children Assessment and Support Teams (CAST).
- We have begun to implement the Care Review starting with the recruitment of Family Practitioners. These new members of our team have now started to case hold in CAST.

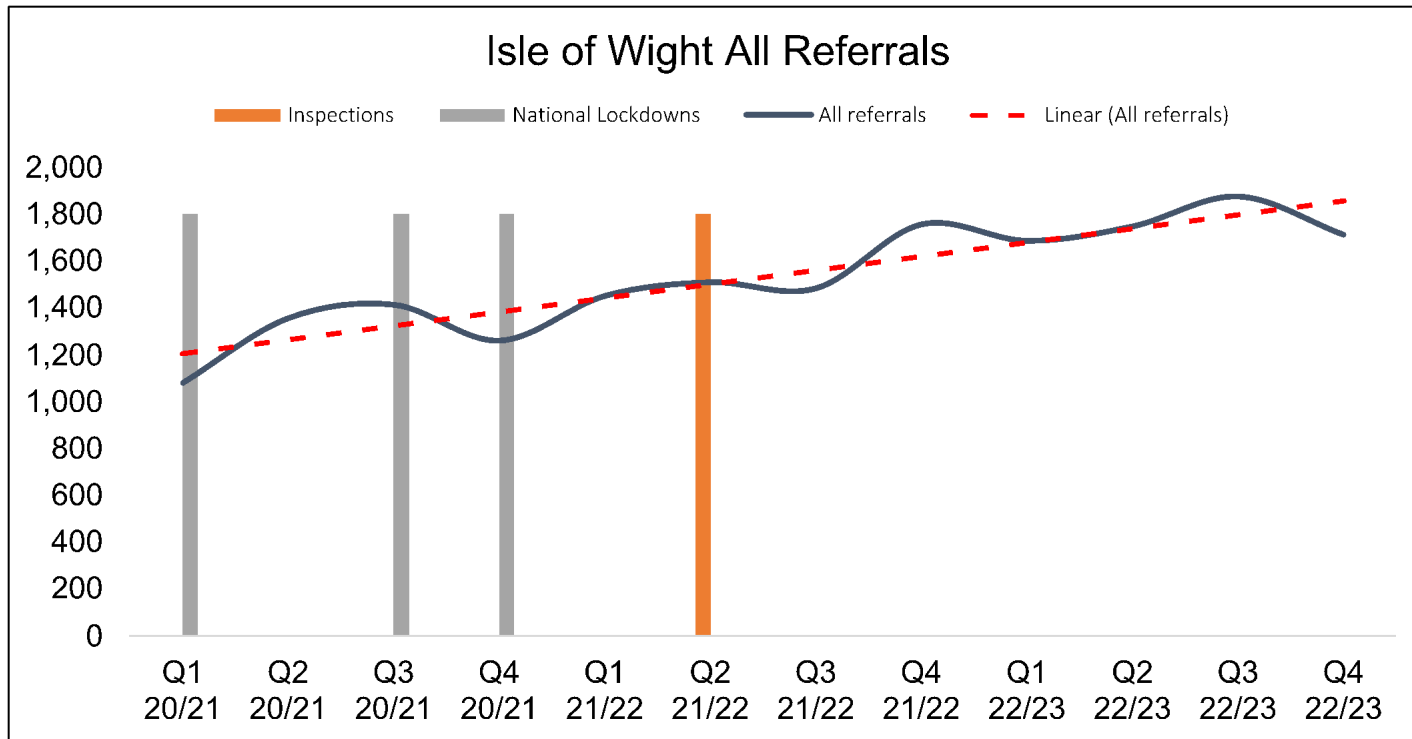
Performance – Contacts

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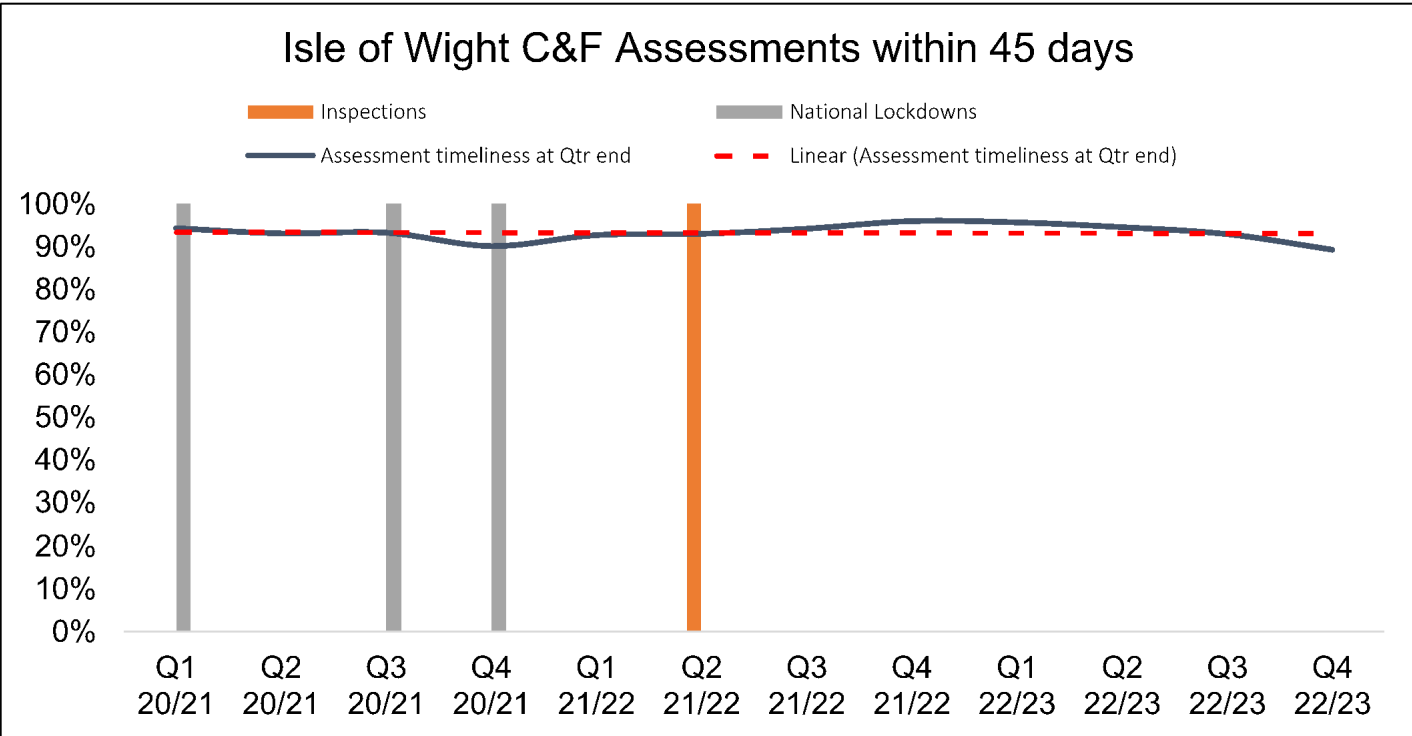


Performance - Referrals

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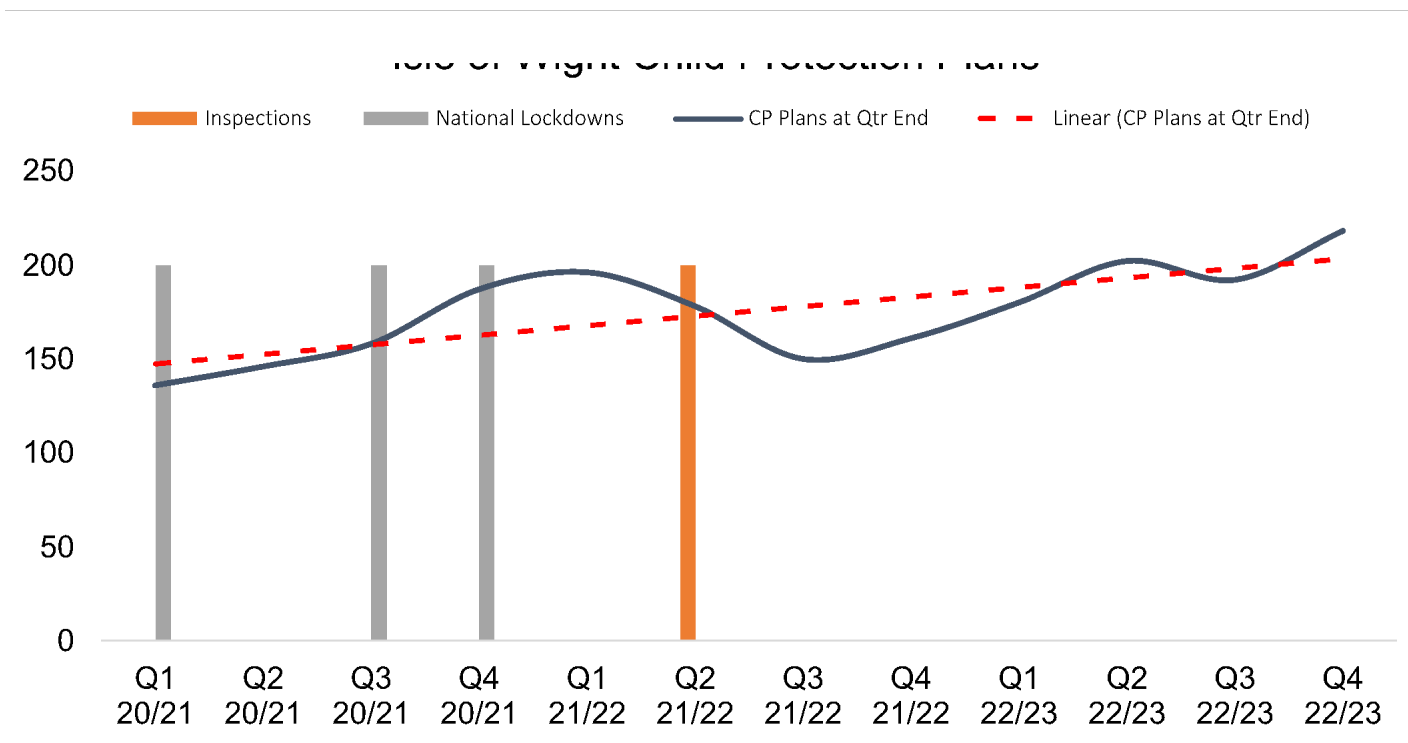


Performance- timely response



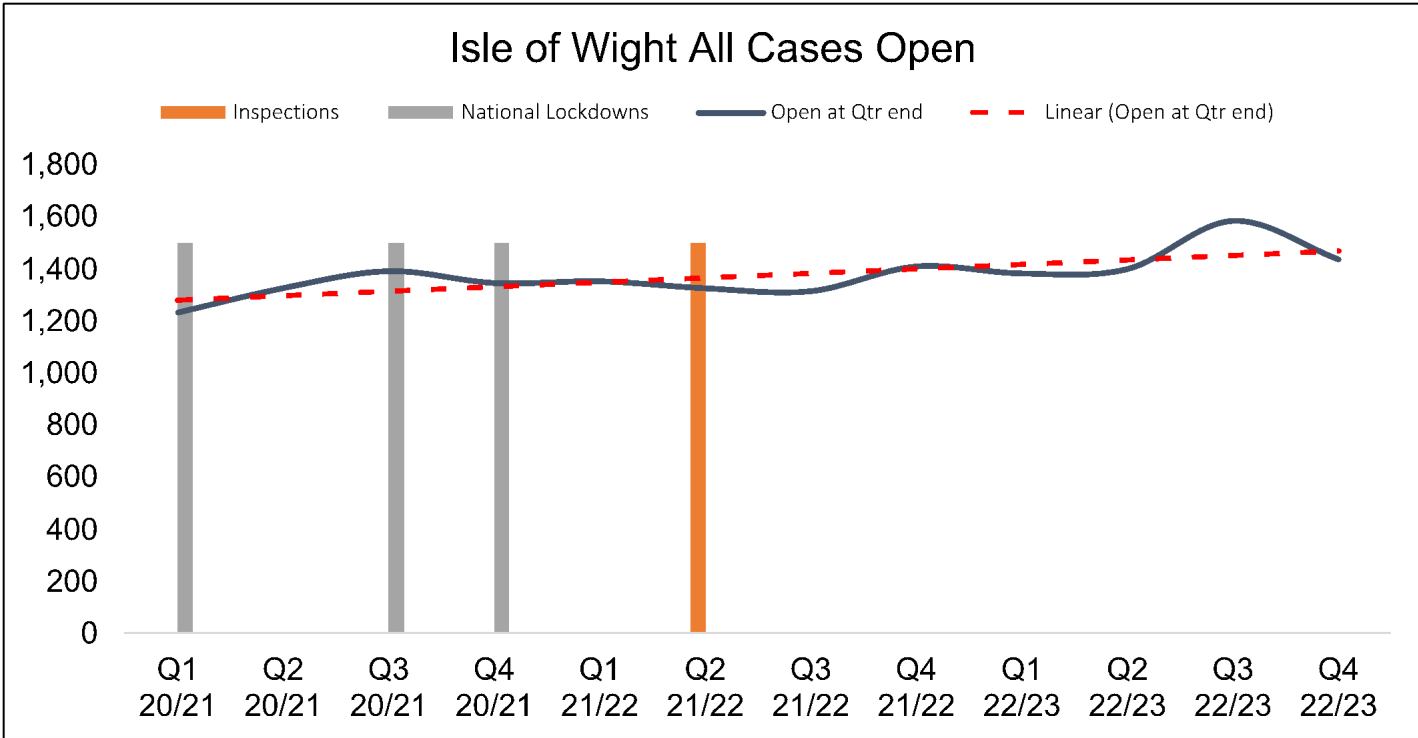
Children subject to child protection planning

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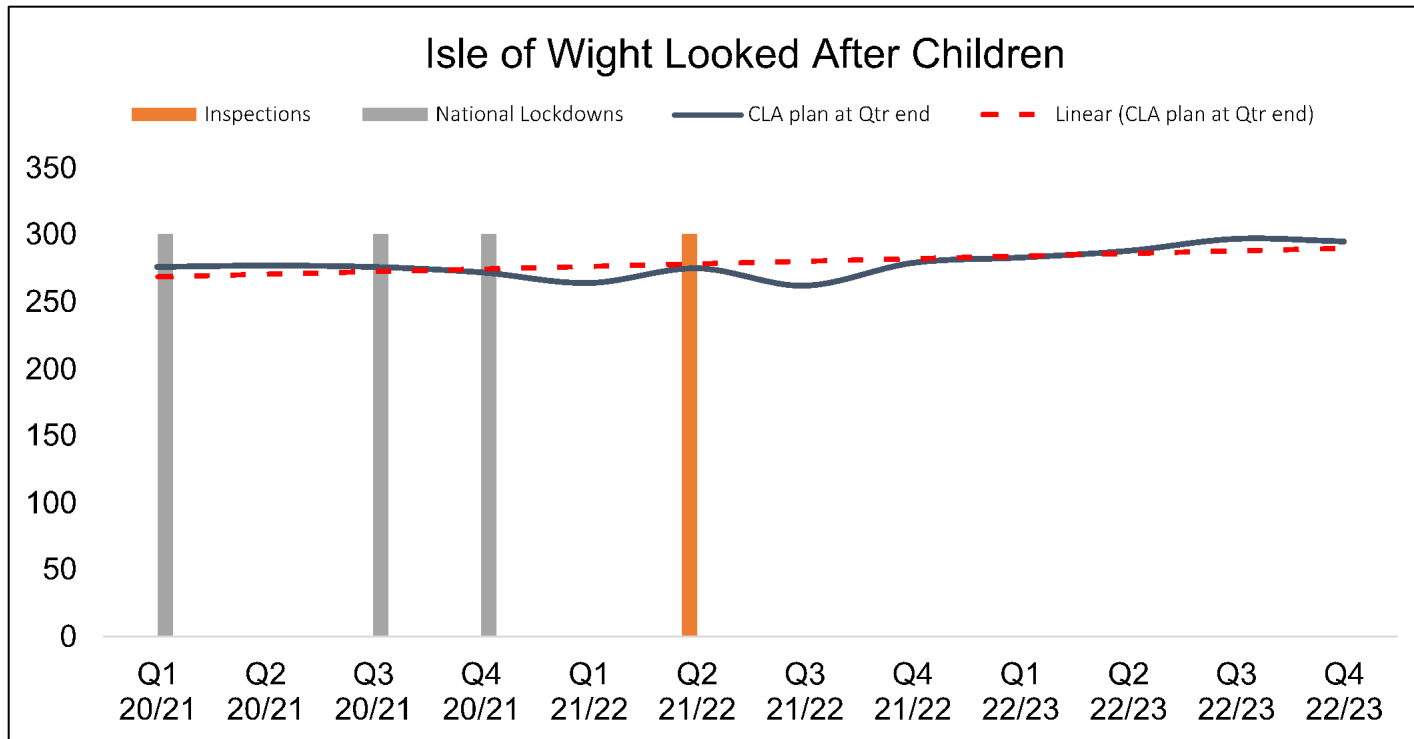
Children in need

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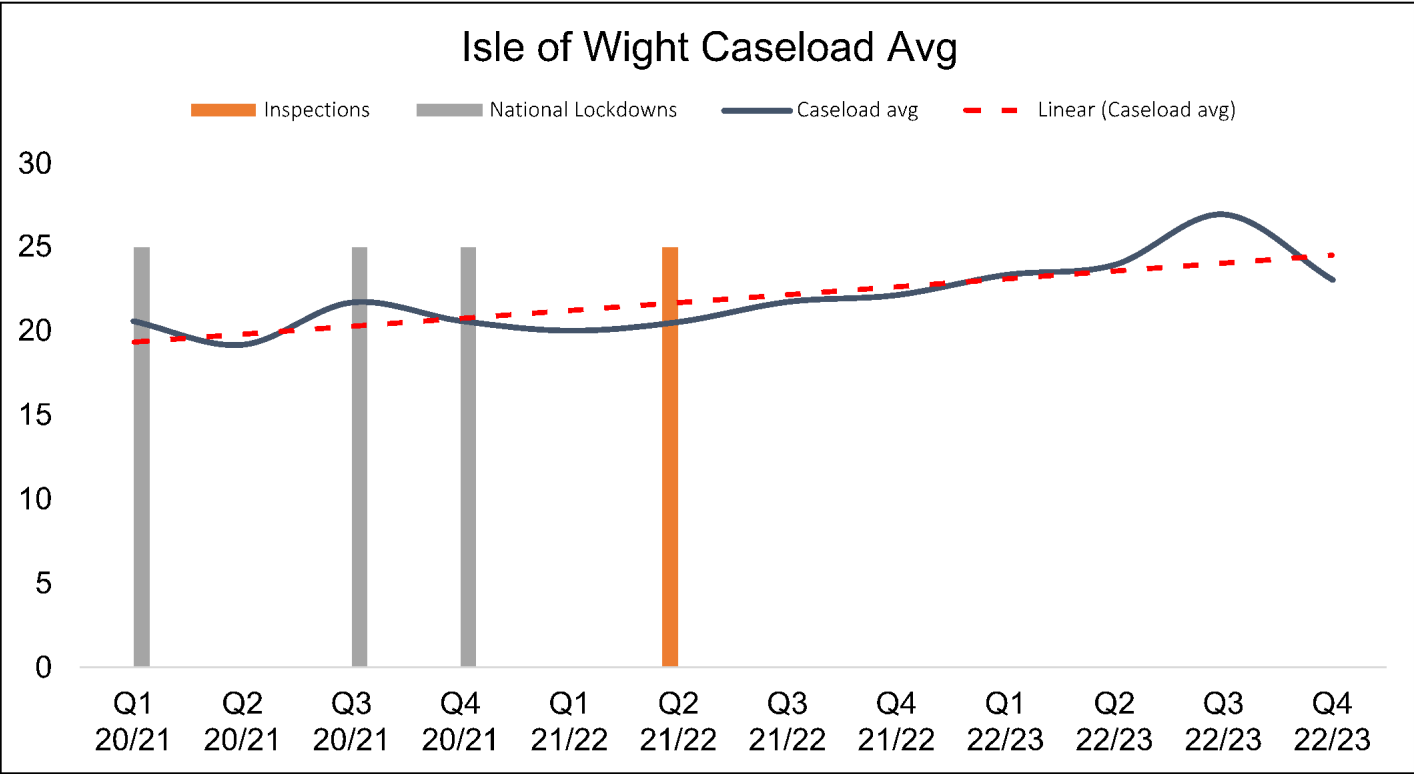
Looked After Children (LAC)

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Performance - Caseloads

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Performance and Caseloads

- Whilst demand has increased and less staff have been available we have continued to work hard to maintain performance despite having higher than usual caseloads at times.
- Caseloads have decreased again since recruitment and retention of staff has improved and we have recruited Family Practitioners.

Quality Assurance

- Case file auditing undertaken every month by ATMs and TMs.
- In quarter four, 38 case audits undertaken.
- Evidence of practitioner analysis which influences decision making in 97% of cases.
- Evidence that the assessment has informed the intervention/plan in 95% and evidence of positive outcomes as a result of this for the child/young person in 95% of cases.
- Evidence of multi-agency engagement in planning in 100% of cases, with evidence that this has improved outcomes for the child in 100% of cases.
- Case summaries reflect progress and positive changes for the child/young person in line with the assessment and plan in 92% of cases.
- There is evidence of management decisions in 92% of cases, with decisions evidencing appropriate direction in the case to protect and improve outcomes for the child/young person 92%.
- Evidence of supervision as per policy in 84% of cases.

Children in Care

- There were 295 children in the care of the Isle of Wight local authority at end of Q4, a reduction from 297 at the end of Q3.
- With improved practice, the introduction of the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Approach, RAFT delivering multi-agency support to priority cohorts it had been anticipated that there would be a gradual reduction of children on a child protection plan and then CIC, but due the increase of work following covid this has had less of a reduction so far.
- There is a shortage of skilled foster carers available on the island and residential and school provision on the island is limited. There is work being undertaken to try to improve the foster care and residential care provision to children on the island.
- Despite the challenges in finding placements for children the number of children with three or more moved has decreased. Work continues to identify placement needs that are emerging. Good understanding of placement movements and the needs of children and skills of carers and providers means that good matches can be made which reduces the need for placement moves. There is good work between the placement team, fostering and children's teams to enable matches to be strong.
- The percentage of children being placed on the island is 61.4% and we are working with local providers to increase their capacity so more island children can remain living here.

Challenges around placements and supported accommodation due to increased demand

The Isle of Wight have a commissioning framework for supported accommodation for young people in care aged 16/17 years and for care experienced young people.

This is called Pathways to Independent Adulthood and was developed with young people as an action from the Corporate Parenting Board.

Current challenge is the providers are meeting the needs of young people to be ready to move on to independent living. However, due to the lack of available and affordable accommodation, young people can remain in supported accommodation longer than they need to and this results in other young people being unable to move from residential or foster care into supported accommodation.

Challenges around placements and supported accommodation due to increased demand

Financial cost is significant.

Residential and Secure Placement Forecast Outturn = £6.7M

Purchased Fostering (IFA) = £2.1M

Supported Accommodation = £1.6M

Total = £10.4M

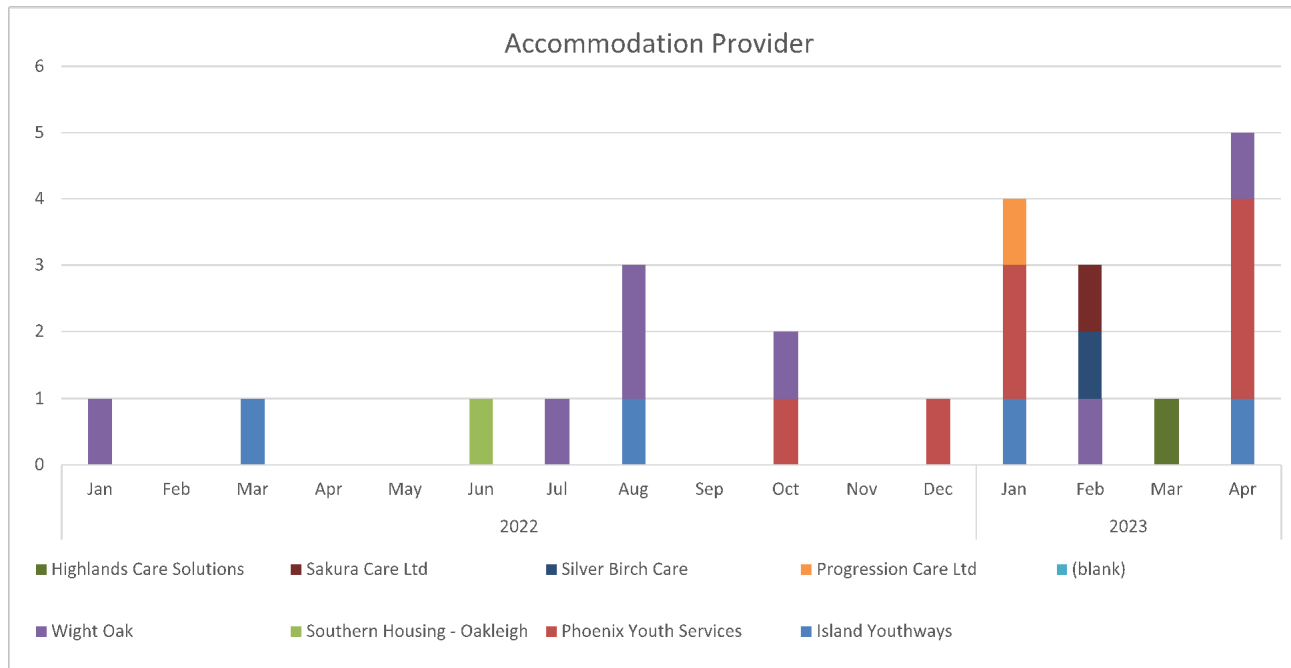
The Pathways Framework has 25 units spread over 5 providers.

At the end of the period IOW have 17 children aged 16/17 years old in supported accommodation.

The 16 of these are on the Isle of Wight and with contracted providers who have provided evidence of their eligibility as part of the tender process.

Due diligence checks and risk assessments are carried out for all unregulated placements.

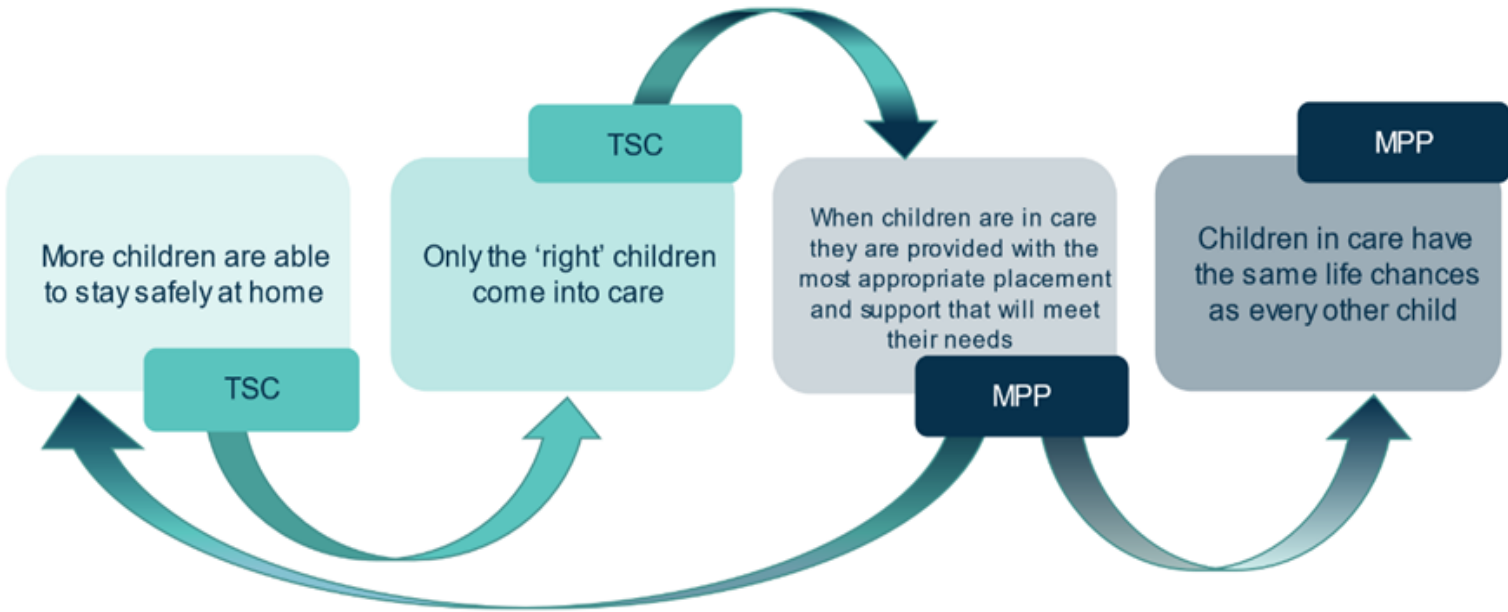
Challenges around placements and supported accommodation due to increased demand



Modernising Placements Programme

MPP is a transformational programme within Children's Services, part of which is to increase the number, choice and quality of homes for children in care to live, though we continue to face many challenges. The Isle of Wight is benefiting from the experience of Hampshire who are delivering MPP for the Isle of Wight.

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Education and Inclusion Headlines

- The September guarantee (2022) was 98.3% compared to national average of 94.5%. This is the proportion of 16 and 17 year olds given an offer of education, employment and training.

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62% of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) were produced within 20 weeks for the last quarter. National average is just under 60%.

Education and Inclusion Headlines

- Proportion of schools graded good or better by Ofsted is 76%.
- Total number of children being electively home educated is 591 compared to 556 at the same point last year.
- Proportion of families that electively home educate that have engaged with the Local Authority during 2022/23, to date, is 95% compared to 90% at the same point last year.

Education and Inclusion Headlines

- Attendance statistics have been produced by the DfE for the 2022/23 Autumn Term. These show that the attendance rate on the Isle of Wight was 90.9% compared to a national average of 92.5%.
- Page 33 In the Autumn Term 2022/23 Persistent Absence rates (below 90%) on the Isle of Wight were 32.8% compared to a national average of 24.2%
- In the Autumn Term 2022/23 Severe Absence rates (below 50%) on the Isle of Wight were 2.1% compared to a national average of 1.7%

Education and Inclusion Headlines

- Number of permanent exclusions in 2021/22 Autumn and Spring Term combined is 5 (10 in total in 2020/21).
- Number of suspensions in 2021/22 Autumn and Spring Term combined is 867 (1092 in total in 2020/21 academic year, but lower due to lockdown periods).
- Final attainment data for 2022 was published in January 2023 and brought to Policy and Scrutiny Committee in a full attainment report. The final attainment data for 2023 will be published in January 2024



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Agenda Item Introduction

Committee	POLICY AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES, EDUCATION AND SKILLS
Date	15 JUNE 2023
Topic	FOSTERING ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23

BACKGROUND

On an annual basis the committee receives an update on the Isle of Wight Council's fostering service in line with fostering services statutory regulations and guidance.

FOCUS FOR SCRUTINY

- What successes have happened within the last year?
- What challenges have been faced in the last year and what are the lessons learned?
- Are there examples of best practice from other local authorities that can be utilised on the Isle of Wight?
- What improvements have been identified and what are the timelines for improvements?
- How can the committee support in improving the fostering service?

APPROACH

A committee report to be provided.

APPENDICES ATTACHED

Fostering Annual Report 2022-23

Contact Point: Melanie White, Scrutiny Officer, ☎ 821000 ext 8876
e-mail melanie.white@iow.gov.uk

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Committee report

Committee	POLICY AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES, EDUCATION AND SKILLS
Date	15 JUNE 2023
Title	FOSTERING ANNUAL REPORT 2022/2023
Report of	DEBBIE PRICE, ACTING AREA DIRECTOR CHILDREN CHILDREN'S SERVICES

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides an update on The Isle of Wight Council's fostering service in line with fostering services statutory regulations and guidance.

Fostering Services work within the Fostering Regulations and the National Minimum Standards for Foster carers as well as the Children Act and Care Standards Act.

Foster carers can be approved by independent fostering agencies or the Local Authority. When the local authority does not have enough foster carers or the right foster carers to meet a child's needs they purchase placements from Independent fostering agencies.

Local Authority fostering services are inspected by Ofsted as part of the overall inspection of Children's Services.

During 2022/2023 the service successfully recruited and approved 7 new General fostering households.

At the end of March 2023 there were 81 registered and approved foster carer households in the isle of Wight with 7 general carer and 2 connected carer households in assessment.

There is a target to recruit 10 fostering households in 2023/24.

1. Marketing

1.1 Marketing activities have been much more varied during 2022-2023, with an increase in recruitment events both virtually and face-to-face. The team are keen on building a strong marketing strategy to increase our enquiry cases and build our identity. A Marketing Apprentice has been an addition to the

team, introduced early 2023, meaning more time and attention can be dedicated to this. The team attended several community events through the summer, such as The County Show or IW Pride, and found footfall numbers were high. We were able to successfully utilise the John Lewis Christmas advert, which drew attention to the topic of fostering, and have a stand put up in Waitrose. The focus for 2023 is to conceive a solid plan for new, creative marketing projects.

- 1.2 Participation activities have been celebrated in the local media, via press release. Good news stories such as this have gained positive attention. Foster carers have given praise to the service for their work in this area. It is intended that the programme will continue to influence positive word of mouth referrals. Carers are positive about the regular activities and competitions and have also expressed that they appreciate the birth children being included in these activities as it promotes the entire household involvement. This will continue and we are asking carers for ideas for future activities.
- 1.3 There has been a strong focus on building our online presence throughout 2022 and into 2023. This has proven to be worthwhile as our enquires have been driven most from Digital platforms; 22 individuals stating that they had come across the service online, either via social media or organically through search engines. The team continue to build on improving our digital marketing methods. The Fostering Facebook page is being regularly kept up to date with engaging content and information regarding our recruitment events. The team are also exploring the idea of having a presence on Instagram, to attract a broader range of demographics.
- 1.4 The service has also taken part in the southeast regional fostering forums 'mystery shopper' exercise. This is now in its 6th cohort and the IOW have undertaken the mystery shopper role. This was interesting as it gave us the opportunity to experience other agencies responses to enquirers and to use the learning to improve our own. Out of 24 LA's and IFA's we had the third highest average score of 7.38. The issue noted for us was the accessibility of the website. The mystery shopper group have randomly looked at LA websites. We were in the January 2023 cohort and whilst the information provided was clear it was basic and did not enable events etc to be publicised. The other major issue was the ability to make an online enquiry. The feedback stated Entering an enquiry is laborious and requires much personal information, when just entering an e-mail address to request an information pack would be less onerous.
- 1.5 The IOW upgraded website has now been fully launched however this still does not enable fostering to have the platform that it needs to be on a more competitive level with other recruiting agencies and does not address the issues raised above. This is being raised as an issue with the Service Manager as Fostering requires its own site akin to the website that Hampshire currently provide for its Fostering Service.

2. The Fostering Service

- 2.1 The Permanence Team is formed of three hubs who each focus on one area of activity. Recruitment and Assessment of Foster carers, support to foster carers and all aspects of Adoption and Special Guardianship
- 2.2 The two Isle of Wight Fostering hubs are comprised of the following:
- 1 Team Manager,
 - 2 Assistant Team Managers,
 - 8.59 FTE Social Workers
 - 3 Fostering Practitioners
 - 1 Marketing Apprentice
 - 1 FTE Social Work Personal Assistant
 - 1 FTE Team Administrator.
- 2.3 The recruitment and assessment hub includes the marketing Apprentice who has a focus on all aspects of marketing to ensure we are attracting applicants who can meet the needs of our children. The social workers undertake joint viabilities with the childcare teams and assess and support all general and connected applicants through to Panel and approval.
- 2.4 The Assistant team manager of the support hub attends the placement meetings held three times a week with the commissioning team to ensure appropriate matching and placement stability. The support hub provides a focussed team of social workers to promote stability, development, and retention of our approved carers.
- 2.5 This has enabled each hub to focus on their specialisms of work and has enabled a more focused approach and improvement to timescales, compliance, and quality assurance.

3. Recruitment of Foster Carers

- 3.1 Targets for our recruitment of Foster Carers have fallen short and therefore not been met. To drive recruitment, the team is actively focusing on delivering a greater range of marketing and recruitment events. However, it is worth noting that the team manager attended the Southeast fostering forum, and it is clear by other authorities that there does appear to be a national issue in terms of attracting foster carers. The issue of recruitment is also being considered within the work of the Modernising Placements agenda. Statistics are again lower than the previous year. It is understood that other local authorities are experiencing the same trends. Influencing factors in foster carer recruitment are believed to be higher costs of living, the war in Ukraine and adjustments to life post lockdown.
- 3.2 The team have held more recruitment activities in the community and are re-establishing the schedule of events for next year back to full capacity. The team made use of the high footfall during the summer season, by attending many community events. This is to be a strong focus again for Summer 2023, as well as the delivering of more effective marketing across ferry links and tourist

attractions. Our recruitment activities have predominately been in the form of pop-up stands in supermarkets, town centres or cafes. However, a more diverse range of activities will be considered.

3.3 7 new General Fostering households have been approved from an initial enquiry count of 57. The end of year conversion rate was 12.2% - which is an improvement on the year before.

3.4 There are two parts to the general fostering assessment – part one where we gather initial checks and references and part two which is the assessment itself. The service continues to complete these concurrently to reduce the time applicants are in assessment.

3.5 Recruitment Data for 2022/23

- Number of enquiries 57
- Number of Initial Home Visits: 31
- Number of assessments initiated: 12
- Number of approvals 7
- Conversion rate from enquiry to approval: 12.2%

4. **Fostering support**

4.1 It continues to be the aim of the service to ensure that we have a diverse range of foster carers available to meet the needs of Isle of Wight children.

4.2 The Fostering support hub continue to provide support and supervision to all approved foster carers and carers who remain caring for children under staying put (continue to care for children after they turn 18). We continue to provide numerous support groups including monthly lunch and learn/ lite bite sessions, connected carers group, move on to Adoption Group and deliver training which includes Skills to Foster, Fostering Changes, Attachment, Safeguarding/ Safer Caring and Supervised Contact etc.

4.3 Following consultation with carers via their supervisions, we are continuing to provide virtual groups to promote and enable a wider attendance from carers who live on the mainland or have issues that had previously prevented them attending in person. We will continue to work to achieve hybrid arrangements for training and meetings to promote foster carer engagement. We established this with face to face 'lite bites' sessions with a hybrid presence for those on the mainland. We are still working on the technical issues of providing this across all areas. The support hub continues to offer a duty telephone line and are able to arrange virtual teams meetings promptly for carers to ensure they receive the support etc that they require.

4.4 The support hub continues to focus on moving training and support online to increase the opportunity for carers to feel supported and part of the fostering community. This has been especially welcomed by carers who do not reside on the island as they have been able to feel more included and able to access all aspects of Fostering virtually. The support hub has worked with our work force development colleagues and enabled carers to have access to the e learning courses available to the wider workforce. The team have ensured that bespoke training has been recorded and uploaded to the Learning hub so

that this is available to carers. This promotes a wider range of learning opportunities and enable us to monitor and review foster carers progress.

5. Annual Fostering Survey

5.1 In 2022 / 23 the Annual Fostering Survey was revised and sent electronically with expectation that it would increase participation on grounds of convenience. After one month of the survey being live, the number of responses were reviewed, and the uptake remained poor. Individuals from the Council's volunteer programme stepped forward to support the service in collecting feedback from carers. Telephone surveys were offered to Foster Carers, yet engagement in sharing feedback was still very low. We therefore provided an incentive at the Christmas carers event of more raffle tickets if they completed their survey before leaving. 'Surveys means prizes!' This increased the uptake at the event however this still did not exceed the previous year.

In total there were 26 participants. Again, due to a low number of responses the findings were hard to generalise as the sample size was not representative of the population.

5.2 The findings from those who participated in the survey (20 General / 6 Connected), revealed the following key stats:

- 17 (85%) of the General Foster Carer respondents felt that they had **not**, in the past year, taken a placement that they did not feel equipped to care for.
- 69% of **all** respondents feel that they benefit from attending the support groups that are provided by the service. When asked what benefits they receive from attending these sessions, a clear theme amongst many respondents was social opportunities. Carers also mentioned the enjoyment of taking part in something educational. One carer said the sessions are *'Well run and resourced.'* with *'Interesting guest speakers and subjects.'*
- 73% of **all** respondents feel that the Fostering Service keep them well informed.
- When asked how fostering has impacted their family, one respondent stated that their family are *'extremely supportive but have to make huge adjustments in their lives to accommodate the children and my being entirely focused on our yp's needs.'* This consequently leads to a restrict in their visits due to finding the needs and behaviours of the young person *'very difficult to understand'*.
- 42% of **all** respondents claim to be very satisfied with the fostering allowances that they receive. However, it is evident that carers are concerned regarding rising living costs and expenses. One person stated that the *'Allowance needs to perhaps take into consideration household and daily expenses increase which has greatly escalated in the last 6 months.'* Additionally, another respondent mentions *'When an IRO agrees with you for a hobby to be started but no help in paying towards it, it is pretty much a dead in the water idea at this point.'*

- When commenting on support one respondent wrote: *‘Having always fostered for the Local Authority, we have always received the greatest support from Fostering.’ Yet, they also mention that the ‘Children’s Social Worker side needs to improve.’*
- When asked if they have any additional comments they would like to share, one person said: *‘In the circumstances the service is working, we understand the CSWs are stretched, but the children should not be effected.’*

6. Placements

- 6.1 Based on findings from the survey, 90% of General Foster Carer respondents, felt that they had **not** had children placed with them outside of their approval. In addition, 75% of the respondents felt that they had **not** had a child in placement who they were un-equipped to care for.
- 6.2 The Assistant Team Manager and/or Team Manager attends placement meetings three times per week to discuss and plan potential placements with the commissioning team and the childcare teams. This is now embedded in practise and has continued to support careful matching and maintained placement stability for our children and young people in care.
- 6.3 The supervising social worker ensures that placement planning meetings are held within 72 hours of placement and that the Personal Development Plan provides carers with training to support caring for the child. This is overseen by the Assistant team Manager.
- 6.4 The limited evidence from the Foster carer’s survey would suggest that the strategies in place to support placements is having a positive impact and will be continued.

7. Placement Endings

- 7.1 65% of General Foster Carer respondents said that they have experienced a child leave their care in the past year. 85% of whom, felt that they were able to support the child during this time but not all in this position felt supported by the Team.
- 7.2 Respondent feedback was varied when asked how the Service could better support carers during placement endings. One individual answered with the following: *“Provide a better out of hours support network. They would only get involved if a Safeguarding concern which it was not so the issue became bigger and much more stressful for all concerned plus if this child had been listened to in the first place they would have not acted like they did to control their situation & push Social Workers to find them a placement!”*
- 7.3 End of placement reports and disruption meetings are called when a placement ends. The Child’s Social Worker, the child and the foster carer are requested to write an end of placement report which identifies the strengths and weaknesses of the placement. This information is used to inform and improve practice and to support carers who have experienced an unexpected ending to a placement.

8. Training:

- 8.1 IOW Fostering continue to offer a variety of training in a range of mediums as we maximise on the opportunities offered by the new ways of working. This includes guest speakers, peer led discussions, group programmes and online training platforms via the Learning hub.
- 8.2 Supervising Social Workers identify new training opportunities that will support the Carer's Personal development. Any specific requirements can be discussed and commissioned with approval from the Team Manager and Service manager. This may include 121 training from home. Training will be provided weekdays, weekends, and evenings to facilitate attendance.
- 8.3 The Foster carers training pathway has been revised and includes wider training courses available to carers and we are working with the Modernising placements programme to explore more opportunities to enhance and refine this over the next year. Personal development records are maintained within the learning hub so that these are routinely updated each time a course is completed. This has enabled carers to be able to access training on specific needs for their children as and when they need it. The Support hub are exploring options as to how we can share the content of 'lite Bites' sessions on the learning hub. This will enable carers to have a wider access to these at a time that suits them and to be able to revisit the topics.

9. Improving the Service: the main themes

- Involvement of Foster Carers in supporting recruitment events and the service with different activities.
 - Foster carers to have ongoing access to support and training to maximise the use of IT to engage with learning, using fostering e forms and the virtual world.
 - Foster Carers want to see improvements to allowances.
 - To return to more face-to-face training and social events
 - Continue to focus on compliance and quality of reporting by the social workers.
 - Continued focus on recording systems and refining how current data is to be more aligned and ready to transition to the new IT system Mosaic.
 - To research and scope the ability to have a foster carers portal and a more relevant web page.
- 9.1 The Hampshire and Isle of Wight Approach continues to be embedded within the service. All supervision notes and household reviews are written in the strengths-based way. We are applying this approach across the service. There is still work to be done to review all the current forms used to promote this across the service. Examples of this are the change from respite request to sleepover requests thereby making this a more 'normal', less stigmatising, and understandable terminology for children and young people and also calling 'exit' interviews farewell conversations.

- 9.2 The Fostering hubs are exploring with carers which activities they would be happy to support. We intend to develop this into a spreadsheet so that we can approach identified carers for each area e.g., training. We are also planning to establish a focus group to engage foster carers in future developments of the service to ensure we are continuing to meet their needs. This work has started with regular meetings with two foster carer reps, the Team Manager and the Assistant team manager of the Support hub. Although a relatively new initiative, this is already proving positive with foster carers reporting they feel more informed, and that communication is much swifter both ways to resolve /address any issues.
- 9.3 The Support hub are working with the inhouse volunteers to provide individual IT training and support for carers who are less confident with using computers as this is a potential barrier for them going forwards. We need our carers to be able to monitor and safeguard our young people online. Some carers have also expressed issues in accessing laptops etc that are able to support this activity and we are working with the transformation team to identify how we could provide equipment to carers in the same way we do to staff. This would also enhance the security of data and recording for carers as it would be protected via the isle of wight ICT security processes.
- 9.4 Mainland carers and carers in France can access the IOW fostering training and community and are pleased with the support they have been able to access via this way of working that was not previously achievable. This has been maintained and embedded.
- 9.5 Some foster carers have requested that allowances and payment structures are reviewed. There has been an increase in allowances however the IOW service is currently engaging in the Modernising Placements programme with Hampshire to not only review allowances but to review the whole service delivery to ensure we are prepared for the future.
- 9.6 The service has returned to face-to-face visits and events, however, we also want to maintain the positive gains experienced in developing our online presence and use of technology. We have a more agile approach that is responsive to individual needs to promote stability and ensuring foster carers feel more supported.
- 9.7 The service will maintain the focus on performance and quality of reporting to ensure that prospective applicants and carers receive a high-quality service. This will assist in promoting a positive image of IOW fostering to the wider community.

10. Fostering Panel

- 10.1 The service has 12 fostering panels per year which are held monthly. Each panel will hear a maximum of 6 cases. The Panel Chair and all panel members receive an appraisal annually.
- 10.2 Panel feedback from applicants is routinely sought, however limited feedback is received despite creating an online survey designed to encourage greater

participation. We are asking assessing social workers to promote this given that panels are virtual.

- 10.3 The Service Manager and the Team Manager meet with the panel chair on a quarterly basis to discuss any themes in panel, policy or process issues, and training & development needs.
- 10.4 A training day was arranged for panel members and included in part meeting with the Fostering Service Hubs, to update knowledge of policy, thresholds, good practice and to encourage a more coherent way of working. This was well received. The Panel members were also invited to the allegations training with foster carers and fostering staff and 5 members attended. The purpose of this was to establish a common understanding of the process and to discuss different viewpoints on how to manage and support carers who have and could experience allegations. Again, this was well received.
- 10.5 This year an experienced member of Panel who was also a vice chair retired after long service. A local councillor with the lead for Childrens services was recruited and now sits on Panel as a council representative. The Team Manager continues to actively recruit to expand the diversity and to increase the skills, knowledge and experience available to the panel. The focus this year is to recruit a care leaver experienced young person to the panel.

11. Statistics

In House Fostering

- 11.1 There are different types of foster placement as below. This includes registered carers, Staying Put placements, Supported Lodgings providers and the addition of Connected assessments with children in placement.
- 11.2 This is a decrease from the previous year. These households can be broken down into their different registrations as follows:

Registration	Households March 2022	Households March 2023
General Foster Carer (a person assessed to be a foster carer for any child needing care)	42	40
Connected Foster Carer (a person known to the child who is assessed as a foster carer and specifically approved for this child only)	40	35
Supported Lodgings (carers for children 16+ only)	1	1
Family Link (families providing short breaks to children with disabilities)	0	0
Connected Assessments with Child in Placement (a person who is known to the child who has had a short assessment to ensure that they are safe and has	4	5

had the child placed with them whilst a fuller assessment is completed to enable a child to continue to be cared for by someone they know).		
Staying Put (An arrangement to allow a young person to remain living with their foster carer after they have turned 18)	5	0
Total	92	81

i) *Data Source: Data Provided by Isle of Wight Fostering Service.*

ii) *Date Period: Snapshot as at 31st March 2023.*

11.3 The process for supporting timely returns of applications is now embedded and monitored to ensure it is effective. This has produced an improvement in this area. The Fostering Practitioner attached to the Assessment hub has been on long term sick leave and has now left the service which has impacted on the hubs ability to fulfil the tasks of contacting the applicant if the form has not been returned within this time frame to offer support. This has been shared across the hub to ensure applicants get the support required. We are actively recruiting to the post so that this can be a focussed task within the job role.

11.4 This is a particular focus for connected carers with children placed as these are usually within the court arena and have shortened timescales. The team are ensuring regular contact with the children's social worker to provide a supportive approach to these households.

11.5 The challenge of obtaining sections 4 and 5 of the connected persons assessment from the Child/ren's Social Worker in a timely manner continues to an issue for some social workers. When a connected application pack is posted out, the Fostering admin worker emails the section 4 & 5 templates to CSW involved with a request these are completed and returned within 10 working days and the Fostering Practitioner/ Assessing social worker will continue to chase and monitor to ensure this is completed.

11.6 This has encouraged some improvement in the time taken to receive the documents back but requires ongoing monitoring and oversight to ensure it continues to improve. An ATM is scheduled to attend the CAST team meetings to explain the importance of and why we need these sections to promote greater compliance.

Foster carers on hold

11.7 The average number of general foster carer households on hold during the year has been 2.5 households. This is 6.25% of the available households. These have been for a variety of reasons; the majority being taking a break post adoption move on, a challenging placement or taking time to consider health and work commitments.

Timeliness of household reviews

Reviews completed on time %											
APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR
100	98	95.1	85.5	85	83.1	77	74	74	70	65	76.3

- 11.8 This has been identified as a focus for the hub to address. There has been a dip in performance over the year which reflects the impact of staffing capacity. The focus continues to be on achieving compliance to ensure fostering households are well supported with the expectation that all HHR's are scheduled and undertaken within the requirements and that compliance is then maintained. Whilst staffing was an issue the focus was on supervisions to ensure households and carers were supported. This is reflected in the figures below. Measures have been put in place with protected days for workers to complete reviews and they are scheduled into diaries to ensure this is achievable and prevent drift. The 22/23 level was 82%. The target is to return to the level of performance seen in 21/22 of 99%.

Timeliness of supervision visits

Supervision completed on time %											
APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR
95.1	92	92	88	99	96.3	94	97	91	97.2	93.2	97.4

- 11.9 This is a good area of performance and evidence that the supervision of foster carers has remained a high priority this year despite the staffing capacity issues experienced the hub achieved 94.4%. Again, the hub has been tasked to improve this target to a consistent 100% with weekly workload lists being shared to ensure any visits are covered where necessary.

Timeliness of unannounced visits

Carers who have had an Unannounced visit within last year and have been approved for one year + %											
APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR
83	81	80.5	80.7	67	80	71	62	55	60.3	68	72

- 11.10 This continues to be a focus for the hub as the performance is below expectations. The hub is aware that this is an important indicator as it safeguards children. We have a 'live list' in our teams thread to ensure that workers can access easily carers in an area that they are visiting to undertake unannounced visits to improve performance. This area has also been impacted by staffing issues. The strategy put in place has not achieved the desired approach. Therefore, to improve this area, the ATM will review diaries and allocate unannounced visits to workers to ensure compliance is raised. The percentage last year was 67% and has risen this year to 71.7% and

whilst that is a slight improvement it does not meet the standard required of the Hub.

Medicals

Percentage of Foster carers with health assessments within 3 years											
APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR
76.1	82	77	85	85	88	91	93	94.1	94.1	96.7	97

11.11 In line with policy Hampshire and the isle of Wight complete review health medicals every 3 years. There was an issue at the beginning of the year when the covid self-reporting ended coupled with the increased pressure on GP surgeries. The service monitored those surgeries and worked with health colleagues to find a way forward. This has improved over the year however health issues will continue to be discussed regularly in supervisions to ensure carers are not neglecting their health whilst awaiting medicals. The average this year was 80.4% although the trend is consistently improving indicating that the strategies in place are working.

DBS checks

DBS checks completed with 3 years %											
APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR
99.3	97.8	98.5	98.5	99	98	98	98	98.3	95.8	95.1	92

11.13 This is now an area of sustained area of good performance following sustained targeting since the team was restructured. During this time, they have improved the average in 2019/20 of 78% to 98% in 2021/22. Performance has been maintained in 2022/23 to 97.4% However, it is a requirement that all carers have a valid and in date DBS check. This continues to be monitored closely and the target remains 100% every month.

Deregistration

	Q1 2022/23	Q2 2022/23	Q3 2022/23	Q4 2022/23
General carers	3	2	2	1
Connected Carers	4	6	5	1
Total	7	8	7	2

Over 22/23 there have been 24 fostering household that have been de-registered: 8 general households and 16 connected households.

11.14 Of the Connected carers deregistered, the reasons were:

Reasons for deregistration	
SGO Granted	5
Returned to parents	5

Staying put/ independent living arrangements	2
Deregistered on conclusion of investigation	1
Resigned prior to conclusion of investigation	1
Gave notice due to false allegations/ child behaviour	2

11.15 Of the General Foster carers deregistered, the reasons were:

Reasons for deregistration	
Deregistered on conclusion of investigation	1
Resigned prior to conclusion of investigation	1
Child remained under staying put	1
Retired	1
Staying put arrangement	1
Change in Employment Hours	3

11.16 Of those where a change of circumstances was a factor for deregistration, the most common theme noted is the need for an increase in work commitments. Of the 24 deregistration's, 18 were for positive reasons.

12. Complaints and allegations against foster carers

12.1 The Council has a Complaints and Allegations against Foster Carers procedure as required by the Fostering Services Regulations 2011.

12.2 In total there have been 1 complaints & 2 allegations initiated within the 2022-23 period. The complaint arose from the allegation so both pertain to one fostering household who resigned during the process.

12.3 These were concluded as the following

Complaint	Allegation
1	2

12.4 Of these complaints and allegations, the outcomes were.

Ongoing case, not concluded	0
De Registered	0
Resigned prior to conclusion of investigation.	1
Continuing to foster	0
Assessment Terminated	1

13. Conclusion

13.1 The team have continued to work well and have been able to demonstrate a greater level of compliance across all areas of work with the exception of Unannounced visits and Household reviews. These areas already have strategies in place to address performance over the coming next year.

- 13.2 Placement stability has been good with proactive support being offered and close links via the placement meetings to ensure better matching with foster carers skills sets. This close working relationship with the child in care team continues and this enables us to provide a holistic approach to supporting children and placements.
- 13.3 Assessment timeliness continues to be strong with action taken to address any delay. Dropout rates have improved, and these are closely monitored to ensure we are providing as much support to applicants to continue with the process. We have reviewed all the cases and there were genuine reasons for ending the assessments that we could not have prevented. This continues to be a concern due to the impact on the number of approvals. This is subject to ongoing monitoring and a new marketing strategy will enable us to target more effectively applicants that are able to meet the needs of our children.
- 13.4 The use of IT is embedded for both staff and carers, and this continues to be promoted and supported. The team have developed strategies to move activities to the virtual world to ensure increased accessibility to the service. The foster carers have access to the wider workforce learning hub and training pathways agreed to support them to achieve training in a more flexible way. Face to face training is returning however we will also promote an ongoing hybrid approach to meet the needs of carers who find attending training more of a challenge due to work commitments etc. We are also reviewing the training offer as part of the Modernising Placements programme. Fostering recruitment and assessment continues to be a major focus of activity and Fostering Panels are now held virtually to ensure there is no delay to applicants.
- 13.5 The team have carried vacancies throughout the year which has been a challenge. Recruitment as with other teams has proved more difficult than in previous years however the team have pulled together to ensure that performance and more importantly the support to applicants and carers has been minimised. The staff that left the service, moved for positive career moves rather than dissatisfaction with the service. We have an established admin hub which has supported the team and enabled the workflow to be effectively monitored, reviewed and streamlined in preparation for a new IT system due in the later part of 2023. This has also supported the team with performance and compliance.
- 13.6 This has been a demanding year for the service, the impact of covid continues to be seen within our children and carers, recruitment has been challenging due to the deficit nationwide of social workers and also the cost-of-living crisis. The impact and outcome of this can be seen in the slight drop of performance in some areas. Continuity of service has been maintained and stability for foster carers has been at the heart of our practice. This will continue as staffing levels rise and we develop the service further over the next year. On reflection, the team have shown dedication and commitment to the service and the needs of our children, and I commend them for their resilience. This has been a successful year despite some of the challenges that we have encountered throughout the year.



Agenda Item Introduction

Committee	POLICY AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES, EDUCATION AND SKILLS
Date	15 JUNE 2023
Topic	ADOPTION ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23

BACKGROUND

On an annual basis the committee receives an update from the Isle of Wight adoption team on recruitment activity, interagency activity, complaints and allegations statistics, regarding number of children placed and Adoption Orders.

FOCUS FOR SCRUTINY

- What successes have happened within the last year?
- What challenges have been faced in the last year and what are the lessons learned?
- Are there examples of best practice from other local authorities that can be utilised on the Isle of Wight?
- What improvements have been identified and what are the timelines for improvements?
- How can the committee support in improving the adoption service?

APPROACH

A committee report to be provided.

APPENDICES ATTACHED

Adopt South Annual Report 2022-2023 with Isle of Wight Council Highlights

Contact Point: Melanie White, Scrutiny Officer, ☎ 821000 ext 8876
e-mail melanie.white@iow.gov.uk

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Committee report

Committee	CORPORATE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Date	15 th June 2023
Title	Adopt South – Regional Adoption Agency
Report of	Adopt South – Annual Report 2022-2023 with Isle of Wight Council Highlights

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report and film is to outline the activity of Adopt South, the Regional Adoption Agency for Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth and Southampton local authorities for the financial year 2022-2023.

Executive Summary

This report seeks to present the performance of Adopt South for the financial year 2022-2023 (Year 4), making comparisons on activities since the launch in April 2019.

The report also highlights specific reference to the Isle of Wight's children's journey which includes:

- 83% increase in children's Plans ADM compared to Year 3
- 67% increase in Placement Orders compared to Year 3
- 80% increase in children formally linked compared to last year
- 79% decrease in Adoption Orders
- One child 5+ placed inhouse
- Scorecard 2 was 129 days, just 8 days outside of the gov threshold



BACKGROUND

Adopt South's Year 4 KPIs include:

- Enquiries 8% above 708 target (763)
- Achieved 93% RAA Mystery Shopper Score
- Adoption Information Sessions - 10% above 460 target (508)
- Registration of Interest Forms – 34% above 150 target (201)
- 94 Adopters approved
- 39% (37) adopters approved for sibling groups
- 28% (26) adopters approved for Fostering for Adoption
- Average Enquiry to Assessment Conversion Rate is 24% against a target of 20%
- £124,000 income generated from 4 interagency child placements
- Overall assessment journey 5 months (Government target 6 months)
- £921,475.19 approved by the Adoption Support Fund +18% on Year 3 (£783,714.82)
- £47,579 of income generated from therapeutic courses
- 228 children with families identified + 4% on Y3
- 124 of these have been Hard to Place (54% of total) +7% on Y3
- 119 children have been formally linked to 97 families +28% on Y3
- 38 sibling groups have had families identified +3% on Y3
- 20 children over the age of 5 years +11% on Y3
- 26 children placed in Fostering for Adoption placements
- Just 9 children with no potential links
- Just 2 children (siblings) placed externally at £54,630
- Scorecard 10 433 days, just 7 days above Government guidance (426 days)

Performance Impact

Since launch, Adopt South has improved the outcomes for many children who cannot live with their birth families.

- 746 children have had families identified
- 347 of these children have been Hard to Place
- 438 children formally linked
- 433 new adoptive families approved
- Stage 1 Timescales 1.6 months (Government target is two months)
- Stage 2 Timescales 3.7 months (Government target is four months)
- £2.9 of ASF funding since out launch

How does Adopt South compare to 32 RAAs (**ASGLB data April 2021 – March 2022*):

- Approved the third highest number of adopters
- Our adopters spent less time than any other RAA from enquiry to Stage 1
- 1 of just 2 RAA's where Scorecard 1 is in timescale
- Only RAA who achieved both Stage 1 and Stage 2 in timescales
- Adopt South adopters had the shortest adoption journey from enquiry to approval than any other RAA
- Lowest timescale from Placement Order to Adoption Order



- We placed more children with in-house adopters than any other RAA

Contextual information

In 2015, the Department of Education (DoE) released a Parliamentary Paper, which recommended a move towards grouping neighbouring adoption services into Regional Adoption Agencies (RAA) to improve practice and performance. By 2017, there was a recommendation that local authorities would operate their adoption services in a cluster or group of local authorities within 18 months.

In April 2019, Adopt South was launched. The Regional Adoption Agency is a partnership which includes Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth and Southampton local authorities.

APPENDICES ATTACHED

1. Adopt South's 2022-2023 Annual Report
2. [End of Year 4 Film](#)

BACKGROUND PAPERS

N/A

Contact name: Rachel Reynolds, Head of Service – Adopt South

Tel: 0370 779 5773 Email: Rachel.reynolds@hants.gov.uk

STUART ASHLEY
Director of Children's Services



Adopt South Summary Report

With Isle of Wight Council Highlights

Data and Comparisons to projected targets

Year 4 – 2022-2023

Presented by

Rachel Reynolds
Head of Adopt South

May 2023





Since we started in April 2019:

- 746 children had families identified
- 347 of these children have been Hard to Place
- 438 children formally linked*
- 433 families approved
- Stage 1 timescales 1.6 months
- Stage 2 timescales 3.7 months
- £2.9m of ASF funding since our launch

* Impacted by Covid and Somerset Judgement

How does Adopt South compare to 32 RAAs?

- Approved the third highest number of adopters
- Our adopters spent less time than any other RAA from enquiry to Stage 1
- 1 of just 2 RAA's where Scorecard 1 is in timescale
- Only RAA who achieved both Stage 1 and Stage 2 in timescales
- Adopt South adopters had the shortest adoption journey from enquiry to approval than any other RAA
- Lowest timescale from Placement to Adoption Order
- We placed more children with in-house adopters than any other RAA
- We spent less on interagency placements

ASGLB data 2021 - 2022



Executive Summary -

[End of Year 4 Film](#)

Year 4 – 2022-2023 – Annual Results

Adopt South’s Year 4 has achieved excellent outcomes for both adopter’s and children’s journeys:

Year 4 - Adopter’s Journey

- ↑ **763** Enquiries **8%** above target (708) - 5% above last year
 - Eventbrite appointments introduced and new events
 - Achieved **93%** RAA Mystery Shopper Score
 - Over 2,000 followers on social media
 - #DylanandJames campaign
 - Biggest turnout of runners and supporters at ABP and GSR
- ↑ **508** AIS **10%** above target (460)
- ↑ **274** Enq Discussions **19%** above target (230) -7% above last year
- ↑ **201** RIFs **34%** above target (150) -23% above last year
- ↑ **185** progressed to assessment **30%** above target (142)- 21% above last year
- **94** families approved
- **39%** adopters approved for sibling groups (37)
- **28%** adopters approved for FfA (26)
- Average target to Assessment Rate is (24%) **20% above target** (20%)
- **4** placements sold - 5 children placed generated **£124,000** for year
- Stage 1 Timescales – **1.6 months**
- Stage 2 Timescales - **3.7 months**
- Overall adoption journey – **5 months** – 7% less time than Y3 (5.4 months)

Since the launch of Adopt South in 2019, 772 households have progressed to assessment

Year 4 - Children’s Journey

- **228** children with families identified (150 matches confirmed) +4% on Y3
- **124** of these have been Hard to Place (54% of total) +6% on Y3
- **38** sibling groups with families identified (21 confirmed), 7 with a sibling group of 3 (4 confirmed) + 3% on Y3
- **20** children over 5 years with families identified (16 confirmed) – +186% on Y2
- **119** children formally linked to **97** adopters - **+ 28% on Y3 (including 19 sibling groups, 16 with a sib group of 2, 3 with a sibling group of 3; 9 children over the age of 5**
- Just **9** children with no potential links
- Just **1** Interagency purchase (sibling group of 2) – 117 children placed in house
- **26** children with FFA placements



Year 4 - Children's Journey (Cont'd)

- **433 days** for Scorecard 10 – just 7 days outside of the government guidance (426 days)
- **151** Children's plans sent to ADM +12% above Y3
- **135** Placement Orders Made +10% above Y3
- **105** Adoption Orders Made + 15% above Y3

Adoption Support

- **542** Adoption Support enquiries for year
- **£921,475.19** approved applications from Adoption Support Fund + 18% above Y3
- **£47,579** of income generated from therapeutic courses – +4% on Year 3
- **35** adopter mentors - 245 families receiving mentoring support (214 Assessment/ 31 Adoption Support)



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Introduction

Success Outcomes

Adopt South's fourth year has continued to be strong, and we have seen some significant achievements.

Families have been identified for 228 children and the excellent news is that this has included matches being identified for 124 hard-to-place children, including 38 sibling groups and 20 children over the age of 5 years. Out of the 228 identified matches, 150 have been confirmed/progressed to panel or placement under FfA (Fostering for Adoption), including 21 sibling groups, which consists of 4 sibling groups of 3, and 16 children over the age of 5 years.

- **127 Hampshire children**
- **13 Isle of Wight children**
- **35 Portsmouth children**
- **53 Southampton children**

94 new adoptive households have been approved and 119 children formally linked with 97 families, a 28% increase on the number of children linked last year. This includes 19 sibling groups (16 sibling groups of 2, and 3 sibling groups of 3). It also includes 9 children over the age of 5 years.

- **60 Hampshire children (1 child over the age of 5)**
- **9 Isle of Wight children (1 child over the age of 5)**
- **18 Portsmouth children**
- **32 Southampton children (7 children over the age of 5)**

With the exception of a sibling group of 2, all have been linked with in-house adopters.

There are just 9 children with Placement Orders who currently have no potential links, and who Adopt South are actively family finding for. This includes two sibling groups of three male children and three single children. The three single children include a 6-year-old; all have complex or medical needs. Given the complexities, these children are unfortunately likely to wait longer to find their forever family.

This is one less than last quarter, where 10 children (including a 6-year-old, two 5-year-olds, and a 4-year-old,) all of whom had complex needs including two of the children having a 50% chance of inheriting Huntington's disease, had no potential links. Families have now been found for almost all of these children. The strategies Adopt South have implemented within marketing, recruitment, family finding, Stage 1 and Stage 2 have had a positive impact on the matching opportunities for our sibling groups, seeing 15 sets of siblings proceed to confirmed matches during the last two quarters of Year 3. A further 21 sets of siblings (including four sibling groups of 3) have proceeded to confirmed matches during Year 4.



The number of children waiting continues to remain much lower than at the commencement of Adopt South when there were 39 children with no potential matches.

Since the launch of Adopt South, 433 adoptive families have, therefore, been approved and 438 children have been linked. Of these, 227 have been HCC children; 33 IOW children; 68 PCC children; 110 SCC children.

The ASGLB data (April 2020- March 2021) shows that Adopt South approved the second highest number of adopters out of all 31 Regional Adoption Agencies between April 2020- March 2021 and had the lowest number of children waiting. The data for last year (April 2021- March 2022) shows similar comparisons. There are now 32 Regional Adoption Agencies and Adopt South's children had the lowest timescale out of all 32 RAA's from Placement to Adoption Order. We approved the third highest number of adopters.

Marketing and Recruitment

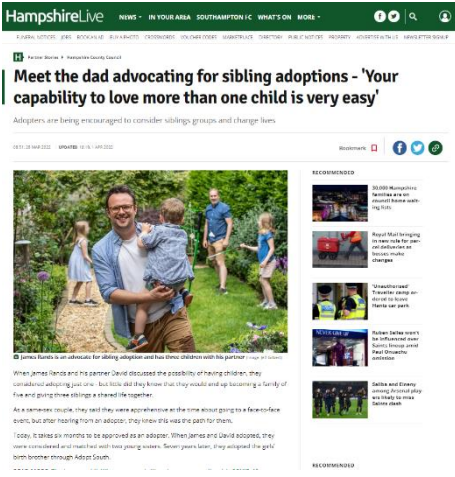
Activity in Year 4 developed key messages and themes on what contacting us felt like, sibling groups, identity and children who wait the longest.

Face to Face events were across the whole of the Adopt South region, with our big quarterly events and monthly events. We also introduced Eventbrite appointments as another way to meet people interested in adoption. The Online Adoption Information Events were heavily promoted and generated around 25 webinar guests fortnightly. Summer months, we attended the New Forest Show, Alresford and Romsey Show, as well as visit shopping centres and areas where there was good footfall across the country.

Advertising consisted of a range of creative styles and messages which featured all different people and children to visually communicate that no family or children are the same and Adopt South is inclusive and welcoming to all different people. These appeared across our regional press, Google AdWords, and various publications including parish magazines, Facebook and Instagram.



Three families featured in Paid advertorial stories covering adopting two girls, siblings of three and identity. The feature was well received, and we saw generation of clicks onto our website and an uplift in activity during this period. The story was shared on our social media pages to gain additional traction.



Radio rotated with a number of scripts raising awareness of adoption and humanising the Adopt South brand. With the cost-of-living crisis worsening throughout 2022 and start of 2023, we introduced a Cost of Loving radio ad to give an empathetic stance around 'we know it's difficult' to encourage people to talk to us.



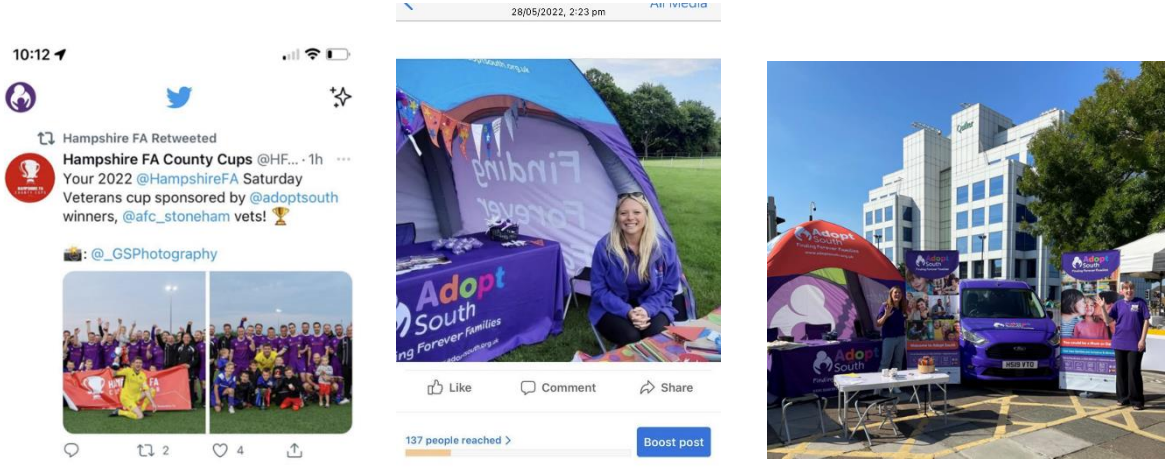
3D reach, the smartphone digital advertising platform continued to generate high click thru to our website promoting events throughout the region.



"Interested in adoption? Book onto our free webinar on 3rd January - TAP HERE for details."

Community events including Hampshire FA's Senior Veteran's Cup Final, local authority community initiatives including Mela festival in Eastleigh, Portsmouth's Paulsgrove community event, Pride in Southampton and activities with our church connections across the region.





Other major events including the ABP Southampton Races (April) and Great South Run (October)

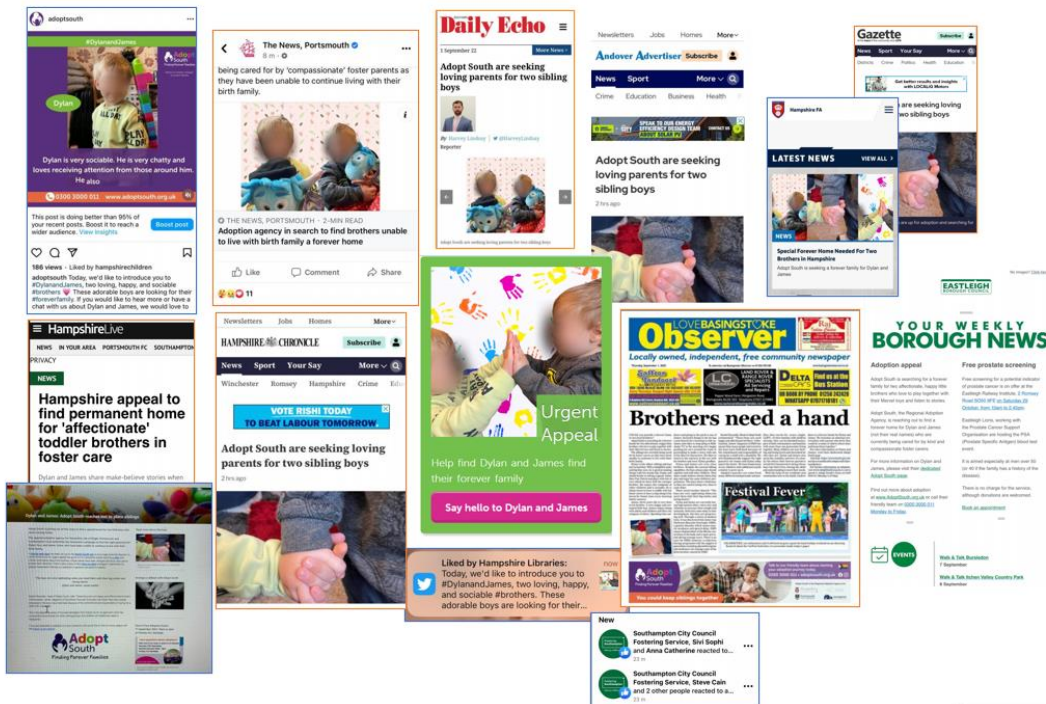


Social media included informative tiles on Fostering for Adoption, LGBT+ Fostering and Adoption Week (March 2023), National Adoption Week (October) signposting to events and call backs as well as being open about money and calling us for an informal chat.

Visits to the Adopt South website were consistent and we could track some activity from digital promotion.

We also ran one Hard-to-Place campaign for Dylan and James, which received a high-level interest resulting in a family being found for the two boys.





There were periods where activity overall was affected by the Ukraine crisis, the death of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II and the increase in the cost of living. With inflationary rises, the marketing budget has been affected by on average 17% increase in costs due to inflation which resulted in monies not being able to be as stretched as the previous year.

Performance and Timescales

The Adopters Journey

The Stage 1 Team have progressed to assessment the **185** new households during Year 4 and have continued to support them to build their skills. They have ensured all applicants have had at least one session of Virtual Reality to increase their understanding of the needs of adopted children.

*Stage 1 timescales have averaged **1.6 months** across the four quarters, remaining well within the government expectation of 2 months.*

The ASGLB data (April 2021- March 2022) shows that last year, Adopt South was the only Regional Adoption Agency who averaged Stage 1 in timescales. It also shows that Adopt South adopters spent less time than any other RAA from Enquiry to Stage 1.

The specialised team have continued to encourage new applicants to consider placements of siblings, older children and children with additional needs, giving greater scope for placement.



245 families (**214** in assessment/placement stage; **31** post order) are currently receiving mentoring support from our **35** Adopter Mentors, who offer support to both potential and post order adopters.

*Overall timescales of Stage 2 assessments achieved **3.7 months** across the four quarters, continuing to be well within the government expectation of 4 months.*

The ASGLB data (April 2021- March 2022) shows that last year, Adopt South was 1 out of just 4 RAA's who averaged Stage 2 in timescales. We were the only RAA, however, who achieved both Stage 1 and Stage 2 in timescales.

The overall adoption journey, averaged 5.0 months, similarly remaining well within the government expectation of 6 months.

The ASGLB data (April 2021- March 2022) shows that last year, Adopt South adopters had the shortest adoption journey from Enquiry to Approval than any other RAA.

Quarter 4 has seen an average of **59** available adopters across the region. At the end of the quarter, 32 of these, however, had been pre-linked with children either with Placement Orders or awaiting Placement Orders, leaving 27 available.

The Child's Journey

Year 4 has seen a significant increase in Children's Plans with **151 being referred to the Agency Decision Maker (ADM)** across the region, a 12% increase on last year when 135 were referred. Hampshire and the Isle of Wight have seen the steepest increase. Hampshire has had 80 Children's Plans referred during the year, compared to 68 last year, **an increase of 18%**. The Isle of Wight has had 11, compared to 6 last year, **an increase of 83%**.

There have been **135 Placement Orders** granted during Year 4, a 10% increase on last year when 123 were granted. Hampshire and the Isle of Wight have seen steep increases. Hampshire has seen 78 Placement Orders granted during the last year, compared to 60 last year, **an increase of 30%**. The Isle of Wight has seen 10, compared to 6 during last year, **an increase of 67%**.

There have been **105 Adoption Orders** made during Year 4, a 15% increase on last year when 91 were made.

During Year 4, both Portsmouth and Southampton have averaged well within the government guidance for Scorecard 10. Hampshire averaged 55 days above the government guidance, the higher timescale due to prolonged care proceedings for a number of children, in addition to delays due to the complexities of the children, including the increase in sibling groups and older children, where family finding has taken longer. The Isle of Wight averaged 106 days above the government guidance.



The higher timescale was due to just 3 children being adopted in Year 4, and one child having a care journey of 913 days, being made subject to a Care Order and then placed with his mother, firstly in a parent and child placement and then in the community. He remained looked after for the whole period.

The average for all 4 Local Authorities combined is **433 days**, just seven days above the government guidance.

Adoption Support

Building on the success of amalgamating and expanding support across the region, alongside the dedicated Advice and Support Line, the Adoption Support Service was redesigned at the start of our fourth year into 4 specialist teams. This has created the opportunity for each team to focus on a specific part of the service and ensure services are continually reviewed and developed. The teams are;

- The Adopt South Family Hub
- The Adopt South Family Support and Assessment Team
- The Adopt South Family Connections Team
- Adoption Support for Adults

Year 4 Highlights:

- **542** new enquiries were received.
- **122** families accessed a workshop.
- Adopt South consultations have continued to be well used, with **43** consultations taking place.
- **92** parents attended virtual guest speaker webinars.
- **164** families have accessed a family activity event.
- **51** Educational Psychologist consultations have been provided.
- **500** parents and children attended our summer and winter Family Fun Days.
- **34** parents have attended a therapeutic parenting programme.
- **16** Video Interaction Guidance packages have been allocated.
- **5** families attended a joint information event (with the Virtual School) on the Isle of Wight.
- **10** Groundworks Fusion activities for young people have taken place.
- Access to 'Catch' online resources have been provided to Adopt South families.
- **116** new Adoption Support Needs Assessments (a 5% increase from last year) and **137** assessment reviews were completed, a combined total of 253.
- **£921,475.19** was approved by the Adoption Support Fund. (**£2,919.161** has, therefore, been approved since launch).
- There were **2,857** exchanges processed. (Additional support was provided to **597** birth and adoptive families - **481** virtual appointments and **116** face to face appointments).
- **21** direct contacts were supervised by Adopt South staff. Support was offered with a further **32** direct contacts, which were facilitated by the families.



Adopt South's Fourth Year

Strengths

New Recruitment Initiatives and the High Number who have progressed to Assessment/Approvals

Adopt South's fourth year has seen extremely encouraging results, both in terms of the numbers of prospective adopters coming forward and new initiatives.

We have continued to see some significant advantages of recruiting as a Regional Adoption Agency with recruitment enquiries continuing to flow in at **763** and **185** new prospective adoptive families progressing to assessment.

The conversion rate from Enquiry to Assessment in Year 4 has been higher at 24%, compared to 21% in Adopt South's third year.

The approval rate has continued to be strong with 433 adopters now being approved since the launch of Adopt South.

One of our initiatives is to increase the use of advocacy in our messaging, endorsing adoption through experiences of adopters telling their story about how they have embraced adoption and support their children's identity. Advertorials and radio testimonials will continue to feature heavily as we continue into Year 5. Our investment with developing relationships with communities has continued to be positive. We have contacted over 185 churches across our region and engaged with 35 individual churches in Hampshire, Portsmouth, Southampton and the Isle of Wight. This includes adoption drop in events and placing our big posters outside church locations.

There is no doubt that our dedicated Recruitment Team, which includes two marketing specialists and a community project worker, have continued to help bring in some significant results. They are a very passionate, innovative team, who offer excellent customer service, always ensuring they call potential applicants back and arrange a visit without delay, at a time of the applicant's choice. This always includes a choice of weekends and evenings, as well as weekdays.

Our fourth year has continued to see many positive comments and feedback on social media from adopters about the service they have received, helping build Adopt South's reputation and has encouraged other potential adopters to progress with Adopt South, rather than with neighbouring Agencies.

The ASGLB data (April 2021- March 2022) shows that Adopt South approved the third highest number of adopters out of all 32 Regional Adoption Agencies last year.



Timely Assessments

Adopt South's fourth year has continued to see both Stage 1 and Stage 2 assessment timescales well within government expectations.

Stage 1 assessments were completed well within the government timescale of 2 months and have averaged **1.6** months.

This compares to an overall average of **1.7** months during Adopt South's third year, **1.5** months during Adopt South's second year and **1.7** months during Adopt South's first year. Pre-Adopt South, timescales averaged **2.1** months, outside of government expectations.

Stage 2 assessments have averaged **3.7** months, which is the same as Year 3 and **3.8** months in both Year 1 and Year 2, well within the government expectation of 4 months, therefore.

The overall adoption journey averaged **5.0** months, which compares to **5.4** months last year and **5.5** months the previous year and remains well within the government expectation of 6 months.

The ASGLB data (April 2021- March 2022) shows that last year, Adopt South was the only RAA who achieved both Stage 1 and Stage 2 in timescales and Adopt South's adopters had the shortest adoption journey.

Number of Families Identified/Numbers of Children Matched

A significant strength has continued to be the number of families identified for the 4 Local Authority's children and the number of children who have been matched.

With **228** children having a family identified (potential and confirmed matches) across the four quarters (which compares to **220** during Adopt South's third year; **150** during Adopt South's second year and **148** during our first year) and **119** formally linked (compared to **93** during Year 3; **108** during Year 2 and **118** during Year 1), the success with family finding continues to be clearly evidenced.

Having started Adopt South's first year with **39** children with no potential links, this was reduced to **12** by the end of the first year. On the completion of our second year, this was reduced further to just **2**. Although this rose to **15** in Year 3 Quarter 2 due to the steep increase in the number of children who were referred to Adopt South, particularly sibling groups, the good news is that this has reduced to **9** this quarter.

The strategies Adopt South has implemented has had a positive impact on the matching opportunities for our sibling groups, seeing 15 sets of siblings proceed to confirmed matches during



the last two quarters of Year 3. A further 21 sets of siblings (including four sibling groups of 3) have proceeded to confirmed matches during Year 4.

The strength of joining together as one Adoption Agency has continued to be clear, with a particular strength of finding families for **124** Hard to Place children across the four quarters, including **38** sibling groups and **20** children over the age of 5 years. (Families were found for **117** Hard to Place children in Year 3, (including **37** sibling groups and **18** children over the age of 5 years); **62** Hard to Place children in Year 2 and **44** in Year 1).

The ASGLB data (April 2020- March 2021) showed that Adopt South had the lowest number of children waiting between April 2020 – March 2021 out of all the Regional Adoption Agencies.

Dedicated Stage 1 Team

Having a dedicated and innovative Stage 1 Team has continued to be a strength as we have ended our fourth year. We continue to be the only Regional Adoption Agency to have a dedicated team for Stage 1 and the benefits are clearly evidenced. The team have continued to support adopters to grow in Stage 1 and to further their understanding of the needs of adopted children and therapeutic parenting. Through the use of Virtual Reality and support to build childcare experience, potential adopters have been able to grow in knowledge and skills to meet the needs of our children, including sibling groups, older children and children with additional needs.

There is no doubt that this has continued to contribute to the high number of children placed in house and the need for very few interagency placements.

Training Pathway

The training offered to prospective adopters throughout their adoption journey has continued to be a strength. In addition to Stage 1 and 2 training, all prospective adopters attend a Paediatric First Aid and Care of Infants course prior to panel to enable them to have additional skills to care for a child when placed.

Following a child being placed, all adopters are encouraged to attend a therapeutic parenting course (Adopting Changes/Adopting Little Changes) to provide them with a toolkit of strategies they can draw upon to support them with caring for their adopted child.

A strength of the training pathway has included courses being co-facilitated by Adopter Mentors and being offered during the daytime, evenings and weekends to ensure that training is accessible to all prospective adopters.

Year 2 saw a pilot being rolled out, 'SteppingStones', a peer support group, which has quickly grown, and a regular cohort of prospective adopters now attend once a week.



Very positive feedback has continued to be received with regard to how equipped adopters feel to care for their adopted child, which is borne out in the low disruption rate since the commencement of Adopt South.

Mentoring Support and Fostering Buddies

Adopt South's Mentoring Scheme has remained a strength. Although initially Cornerstones were commissioned to run the scheme, bringing the scheme in house and employing an Adopter to lead the scheme, has seen it go from strength to strength with **245 families (214 in assessment/placement stage; 31 post order)** receiving support by **35 Adopter Mentors** at the end of Year 4.

Towards the end of last year, the Mentoring Scheme developed and offered bespoke and targeted one-off consultations with Mentors who are experienced in specific areas of adoption. This included consultations on topics such as challenging behaviours, Foetal Alcohol Syndrome, unknown future needs, supporting heritage and culture, parental mental health and meeting birth parents. Over the last few months, we have focused on helping prospective adopters understand the importance of direct contact with birth families.

A total of 113 bespoke consultations have been offered since one off consultations started, with 49 being offered in Year 4.

This part of the Mentoring Scheme has continued to grow so much that it allowed us to develop an additional service to all prospective adopters, in the format of live Question and Answer sessions.

The Question-and-Answer sessions are run monthly and are based on bespoke topics such as:

- Adopting with birth children
- Adopting siblings
- The importance of contact and meeting birth parents
- Children waiting to be placed
- Adopting an older child

The uptake of these sessions has been high with 105 households joining the sessions during Year 4.

Positive feedback has continued to be received about the scheme and of how much it is valued by both prospective adopters going through their adoption journey and by adopters needing additional support post adoption.

The Fostering Buddy Scheme was launched last year and was created in order to bridge the gap for prospective adopters who were struggling to gain childcare experience due to COVID-19. During the first 6 months of the scheme, it quickly became apparent how valuable the Foster Carer chats were



to prospective adopters and it was agreed that everyone would be offered the time to meet and chat to a foster carer.

During Year 4, Foster Carer chats were offered to 103 families, with 102 families taking this up.

256 Foster Carer chats have, therefore, taken place since the scheme was launched.

There are presently **10** Foster Carer Buddies.

Advantages of More Local Placements

With just **2 children (siblings)** being placed externally during Year 4 and only **4** children (out of 93) being placed externally during Year 3, **3** (out of 118) and **4** (out of 108) in Year's 1 and 2, noticeable advantages have continued to be seen. These include adoptive families being able to access Adopt South's adoption support locally and children being able to maintain any local links, along with the impact on staff time and significantly reduced travel.

Regional Adoption Support

Amalgamating and expanding support, therapeutic training courses, workshops, coffee and chat sessions, support groups, family activities, Adopt South and Educational Psychologist consultations and individual support packages across the region, along with the dedicated Advice and Support Line and commissioning *Catch* from PACT and activities for young people from Groundworks, has continued to see clear evidence of more effective adoption support for adopters.

Some very positive feedback has continued to be received regarding the support and activities available.

Low Interagency Spend/High Number of Adopters Sold

With just one external placement purchased during Year 4, interagency spend has remained low and well within budget.

The current income target for sold adopters is £135,000, based on 5 placements of children from other RAA's with Adopt South adopters. At the end of Year 4, 4 placements were sold with 5 children placed, generating an income of **£124,000**.



Timely Matching/Scorecards

Year 4 has continued to see strong evidence of timely matching.

The most recent data insights (ASGLB – April 2022) have highlighted Adopt South as finding matches quickly.

Timescales: children

Agency	BLA to ADM	# ADMs	ADM to PO	# POs	PO to match	# matches	Match to placement	# placed	Placement to AD	# AOs
Target timescale (days)*	182		91		127		31		274	
ENGLAND	256	3459	115	2930	192	2923	25	2984	283	3212
One Adoption West Yorkshire	264	202	94	186	241	183	22	183	265	185
Academy	232	38	87	29	167	38	15	42	396	53
Adoption Courts	260	89	122	82	160	87	25	89	302	114
Together for Adoption	319	78	155	75	188	86	16	84	261	61
Adoption Now	242	161	120	117	171	115	55	121	254	147
Adopt Thames Valley	239	86	110	73	291	90	20	85	268	77
One Adoption North & Humber	261	118	141	95	171	111	25	118	275	84
Adoption Central England	283	128	127	122	210	109	16	110	330	129
Adoption in Merseyside	372	108	143	71	221	58	64	57	324	84
Adoption Tees Valley	299	88	78	85	177	89	15	83	261	86
Adopt South West	333	148	85	133	164	121	28	126	238	91
Adopt North East	256	79	94	73	213	95	24	104	270	139
Adoption West	222	114	87	90	184	102	26	95	277	97
Adopt South	178	143	181	127	120	86	15	83	217	119
Adoption @ Heart	310	127	156	101	227	94	28	104	289	137
Adoption Connects	293	36	47	28	274	19	32	24	253	34
Adoption East Midlands	269	173	147	123	225	137	24	137	285	113
Coram Ambitious for Adoption	266	72	112	55	172	48	19	47	346	42
Adopt London South	256	76	81	52	272	59	19	60	284	65
Adopt London East	282	32	110	18	352	28	22	36	302	49
Adopt London West	291	20	94	25	211	23	21	28	271	28
Adopt London North	280	45	124	40	261	27	63	44	307	29
Adopt South East	236	122	138	96	239	101	34	98	301	96
Adoption Lancashire & Blackpool	497	93	81	85	106	92	19	98	293	101
TogetherChildren	271	146	146	131	185	103	20	101	339	139
Adopt East	249	191	125	195	159	211	32	217	279	216
Family Adoption Links	267	109	184	104	240	85	15	84	364	109
Adoption Partnership South East	230	102	137	70	132	82	14	89	280	74
Cambridgeshire & Peterborough	182	63	68	49	267	47	23	53	283	72
One Adoption South Yorkshire	252	116	101	83	147	93	16	95	275	113
Coast to Coast	242	159	92	153	152	145	15	142	231	156

Adopt South and Adoption Lancashire & Blackpool are finding matches quickly!

It's taking longer to make BIDs than in 2020 (245 days); and POs (108 days)...
...though matches are quicker (216 days)

No impact yet nationally on time to place children following match. Was 27 days in 2020...
...but some RAAs do seem to be experiencing delays

ASGLB

Adoption and Special Guardianship Leadership Board

coram-i
Insight • Innovation

Recognition of Adopt South in the Evaluation of Regional Adoption Agencies Second Report October 2020 and RAA's Practice Note- Recruitment of Adopters

Adopt South's use of Virtual Reality was discussed as a positive intervention in the RAA Evaluation. Similarly, our Mentoring Scheme was discussed in detail in the Evaluation of Regional Adoption Agencies, Second Report (Oct 2020) and identified as a crucial aspect of both adopter preparation and adoption support.

Further to this, a case study outlining Adopt South's partnership with Hampshire Football Association was featured in the nationally published RAA's Practice Note- Recruitment of Adopters.

Strength of Comparisons with other Regional Adoption Agencies

The ASGLB data (April 2020 - March 2021) showed that out of 31 Regional Adoption Agencies:

- Adopt South had the lowest number of children waiting.
- Adopt South approved the second highest number of adopters.
- Our adopters spent less time than any other RAA from enquiry to Stage 1.
- Adopt South was one out of just two RAA's who averaged Stage 1 in timescales.
- Adopt South was one of just five RAA's who averaged Stage 2 in timescales.
- We were the only RAA who achieved both Stage 1 and Stage 2 in timescales.
- Adopt South placed more children with in-house adopters than any other RAA, spending less on interagency placements. Across the RAA's, there was an average of 31% of children placed externally, compared to just 3.7% for Adopt South.
- There were only two RAA's who placed more children than Adopt South in FfA placements.
- Adopt South was one of just eight who had Scorecard 1 under Government guidance.
- Although our Scorecard 2 averaged slightly outside of Government guidance, all RAA's averaged outside of this. Only 5 RAA's averaged lower than us.

The data for last year (April 2021- March 2022) shows similar comparisons. (There are now 32 Regional Adoption Agencies)

- Adopt South had the lowest timescale out of all 32 RAA's from Placement to Adoption Order. (Government expectation is 274 days- Adopt South averaged 198 days; England's average is 280 days).
- Adopt South are 1 out of just 2 RAA's where Scorecard 1 is in timescale. (The last 3 years have been averaged for this timescale- rather than just 2021/22. (Government expectation is 426 days- Adopt South averaged 368 days. England's average is 445 days).
- Adopt South was the 5th lowest for Scorecard 2. Similarly, the last 3 years have been averaged for this timescale. (England's average is 196 days; Adopt South averaged 163 days).
- Only 5 RAA's placed more children in FfA placements than Adopt South.
- Only 7 RAA's had more ADM/Children's Plans than Adopt South which gives an indication for how Adopt South fits with others in size.
- Adopt South approved the third highest number of adopters between April 2021- March 2022.
- Adopt South continues to be the only RAA who achieved Enquiry to Registration of Interest in the 5-day timescale.
- Adopt South was the only RAA who achieved Stage 1 in the 2-month timescale.
- Adopt South was 1 out of just 4 RAA's who achieved Stage 2 in the 4-month timescale.
- Adopt South adopters had the shortest adoption journey from enquiry to approval than any other RAA.



Isle of Wight Council – Local Authority Information 2022-2023

Marketing and Communications Activity

- Events – One drop-in event
- Great South Run (brings people from all across the region including Isle of Wight)
- Isle of Wight Churches – two faith events
- IW County Press
- Radio – IW Radio/Capital Radio/Heart FM/Greatest Hits/Hits Radio/Nation Radio
- Social Media sponsored ads on Isle of Wight
- 3D Reach – mobile advertising
- Messaging - greater emphasis on sibling groups + Radio and Digital Advertorials

Key Facts

- 83% increase in children's Plans ADM compared to Year 3
- 67% increase in Placement Orders compared to Year 3
- 80% increase in children formally linked compared to last year
- No. Children placed is 80% up from the previous year
- 79% decrease in Adoption Orders
- One child 5+ placed inhouse
- Scorecard 2 was 129 days, just 8 days outside of the gov threshold

Annual Highlights for Adopt South's Local Authorities - Isle of Wight Council									
Isle of Wight Council	Pre-Adopt South	Year 1	Diff.	Year 2	Diff.	Year 3	Diff.	Year 4	Diff.
Children's Plans ADM	14	12	-14%	12	0%	6	-50%	11	83%
Placement Orders	9	5	-44%	11	120%	6	-45%	10	67%
Children Linked Formally	10	7	-30%	12	71%	5	-58%	9	80%
Children Placed - Total	10	7	-30%	12	71%	5	-58%	9	80%
Internal	3	7	133%	11	57%	5	-55%	7	40%
External	7	0	-100%	1	∞	0	∞	2	∞
Children with no potential links	2	1	-50%	0	-100%	0	0%	3	∞
Children with Adoption Order	11	9	-18%	5	-44%	14	180%	3	-79%

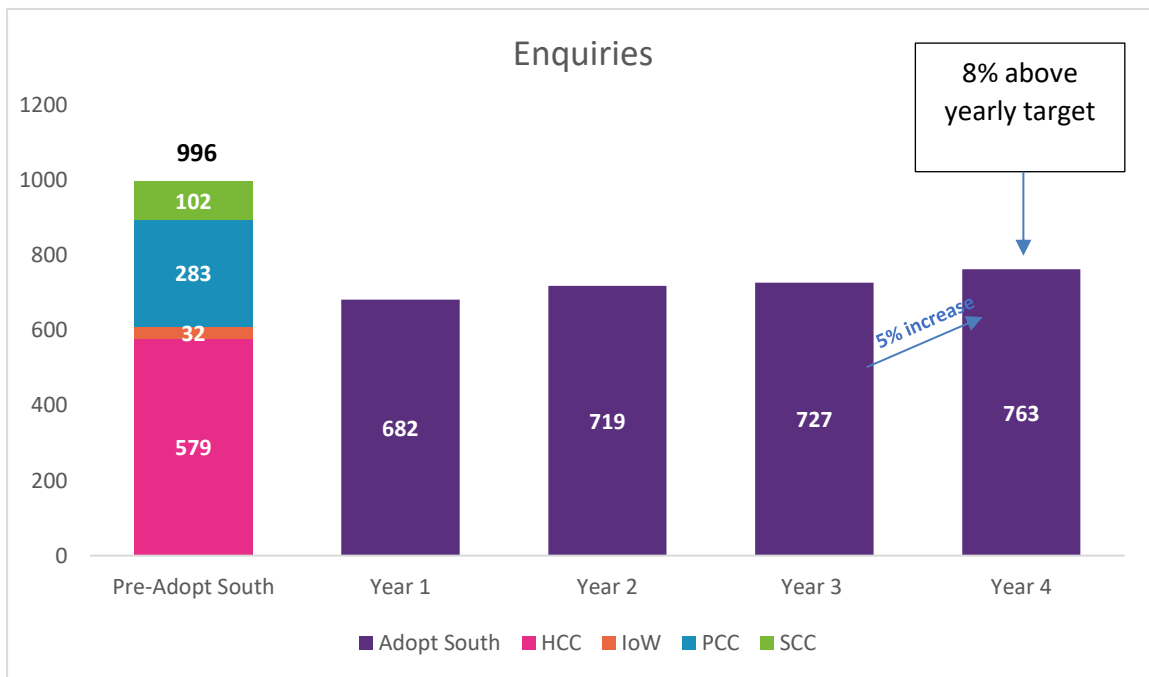


Adopt South’s Year 4 – Q4 Data

Adopter’s Journey: Enquiry to Approval

Enquiries

Table 1.1



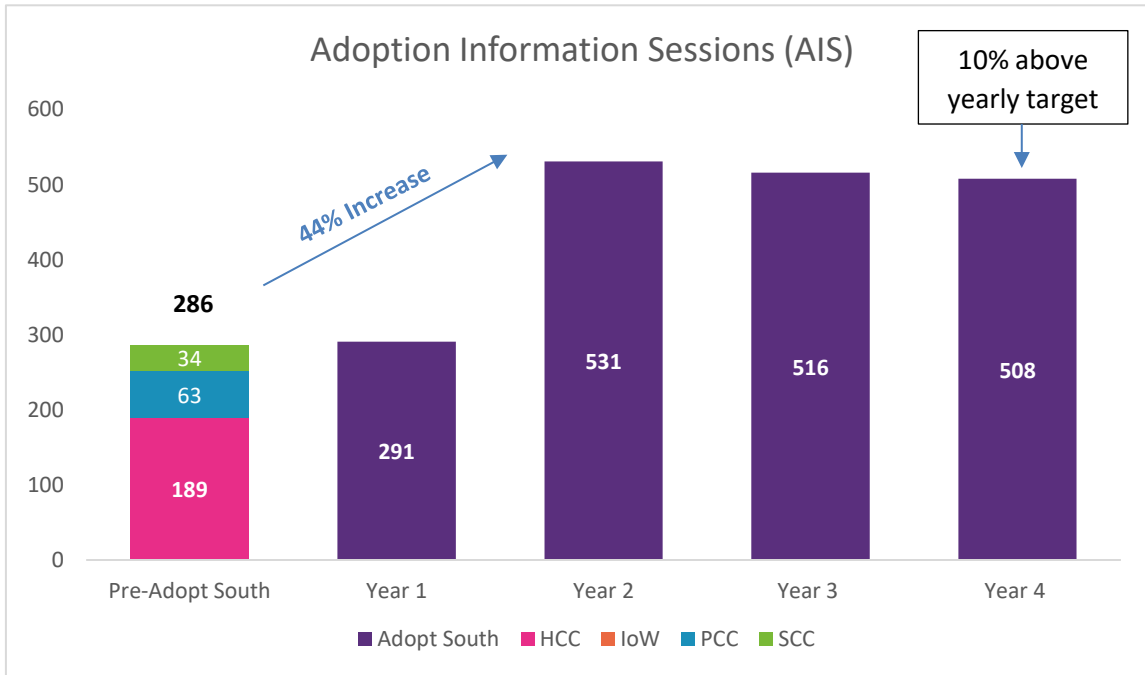
Commentary:

- A total of 763 enquiries have been received during Year 4, 8% above our yearly target of 708 enquiries and 5% higher than the total number of 727 enquiries in Year 3.
- Although enquiries have reduced since Pre-Adopt South, targeted advertising has led to a significantly improved conversion rate.
- Pre-Adopt South conversion to approval was at 9%; over the first two years with Adopt South the conversion rate averaged 17% and averaged 14% in Year 3 and 13% in Year 4 with revised targets for these last two years.
- Although the last two years conversion rate has been lower than the average across our first two years, it reflects our change in messages at the front door and only progressing with prospective adopters who are able to consider the children we have waiting, siblings, older children and children with complex needs.



Adoption Information Sessions (AIS)

Table 1.2



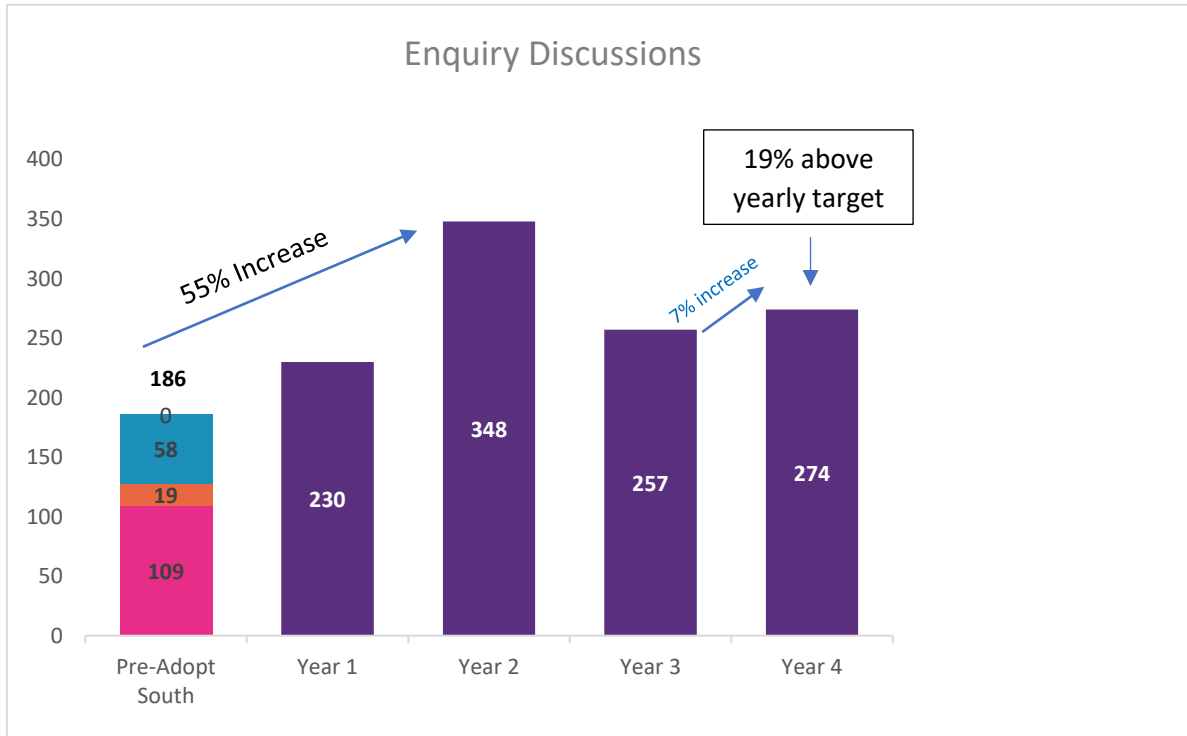
Commentary:

- 508 households attended an Adoption Information Session during Year 4, 10% above our yearly target of 460.
- The number of households attending Adoption Information Sessions increased by an average of 44% over Adopt South's Year 1 and 2 from Pre-Adopt South. $(291+531)/2 = 411$ AIS
- The number of AIS on average over four years (462) compared to Pre-Adopt South (286) is an increase of 60%.



Enquiry Discussions (Previously Pre-Stage Visits)

Table 1.3



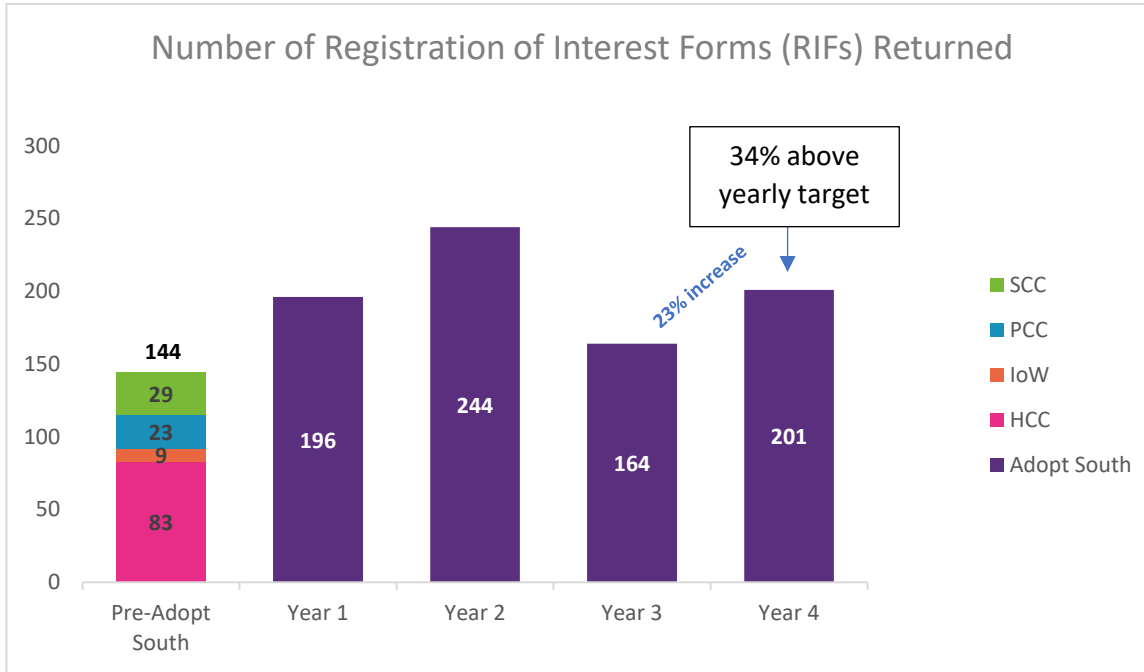
Commentary:

- 274 Enquiry Discussions (previously Pre-Stage Visits) were undertaken during Year 4, 19% above our yearly target of 230.
- Enquiry Discussions (Pre-Stage Visits) increased from Year 1 to Year 2 by 55%. (A total of 230 in Year 1, compared to 348 households in Year 2).



Registration of Interest Forms (RIF's) Returned

Table 1.4



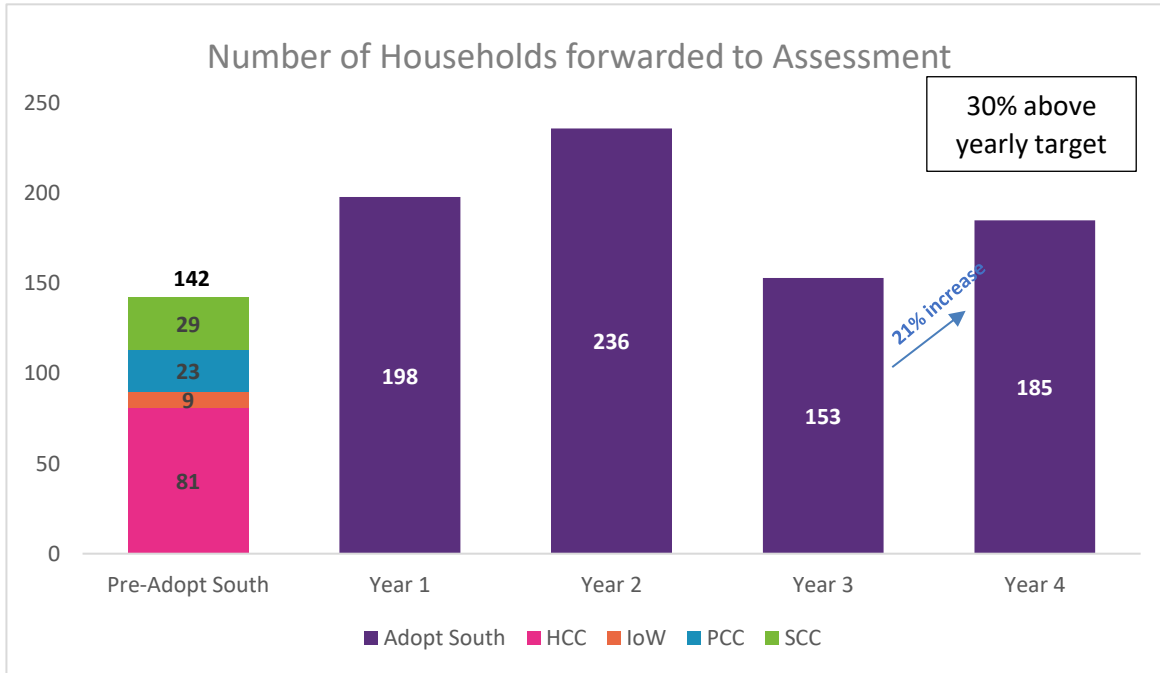
Commentary:

- 201 Registration of Interest Forms were returned during Year 4, 34% above our yearly target of 150.
- The number of Registration of Interest Forms returned increased by 36% in Year 1 and 69% in Year 2. (A total of 144 were returned Pre-Adopt South, compared to 196 in Year 1 and 244 in Year 2).



Number of Households forwarded to Assessment

Table 1.5



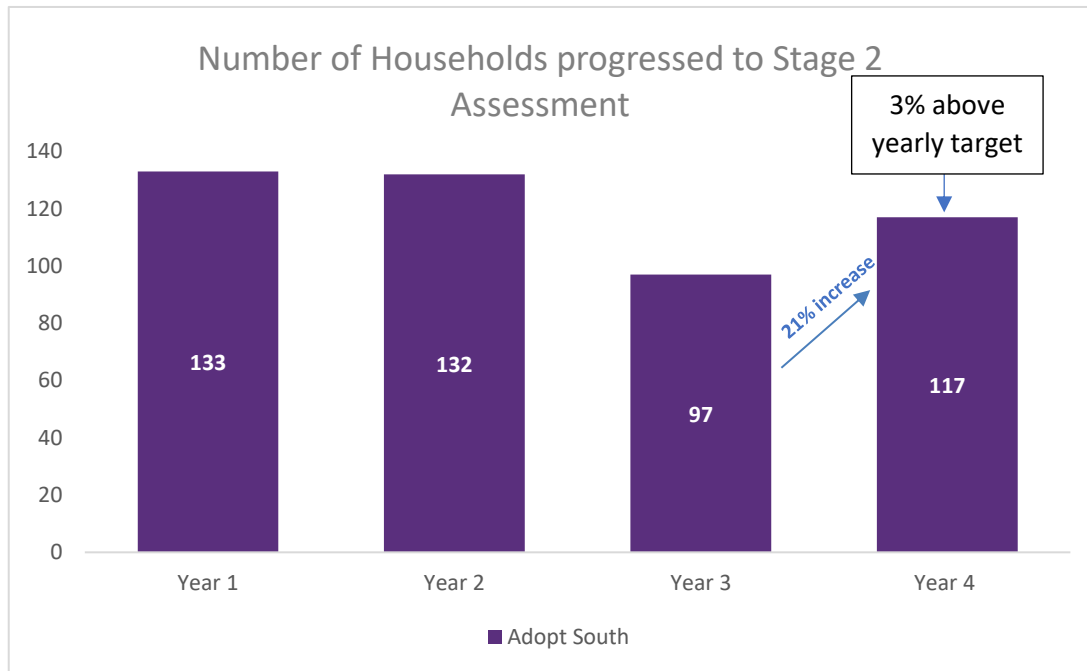
Commentary:

- 185 households were forwarded to assessment during Year 4, 30% above our yearly target of 142.
- The number of households forwarded to assessment increased by 53% on average during Adopt South's first two years. (A total of 142 households progressed Pre-Adopt South, compared to 236 households in Year 2).
- Pre-Adopt South conversion rate from enquiry to assessment was 14%; over Adopt South's first two years, it averaged 31%. During Year 3, it was 21% and during Year 4, 24%, based on a new target adjustment.
- Although the number of households forwarded to assessment during the last two years has been lower than our first two years, this, again, reflects our change in messages at the front door and only progressing with prospective adopters who are able to consider the children we have waiting, siblings, older children and children with complex needs.
- ***Specifically targeting to recruit adopters for sibling groups in Year 3 had great success, with families being identified for 37 sibling groups. This success has continued during Year 4, with families being identified for 38 sibling groups.***



Number of Households progressed to Stage 2 Assessment

Table 1.6



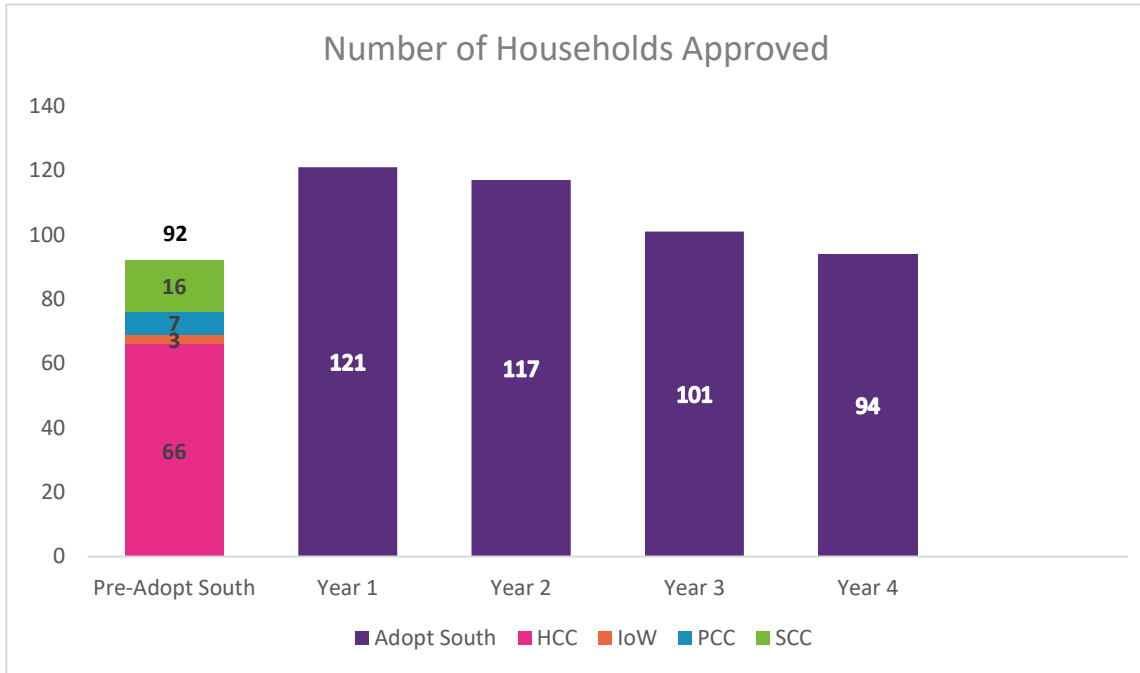
Commentary:

- 117 households were forwarded to Stage 2 assessment during Year 4, 3% above our yearly target of 114 and 21% above the total of 97 in Year 3.
- The service target was to approve 110 new adoptive households during Year 4. To allow for a potential 3% closure rate in Stage 2, this equates to 114 assessments transferring to Stage 2 over the year. On average this means that 9 assessments per month need to transfer from Stage 1 to Stage 2 for full assessment and equates to 28 assessments per quarter.
- Although the number of households forwarded to Stage 2 assessment during the last two years was lower than our first two years, it reflects the targeted work undertaken by the Recruitment and Stage 1 teams and the considerations from applicants who are more suited to the needs of the children waiting to be matched. There continues to be a sufficient number of available prospective adopters to match with younger children. Continuing to have a focus on assessment, support and development of prospective adopters for sibling groups and older children allows us to ensure there is sufficient resource to match the children who are waiting.

Households Approved



Table 1.7



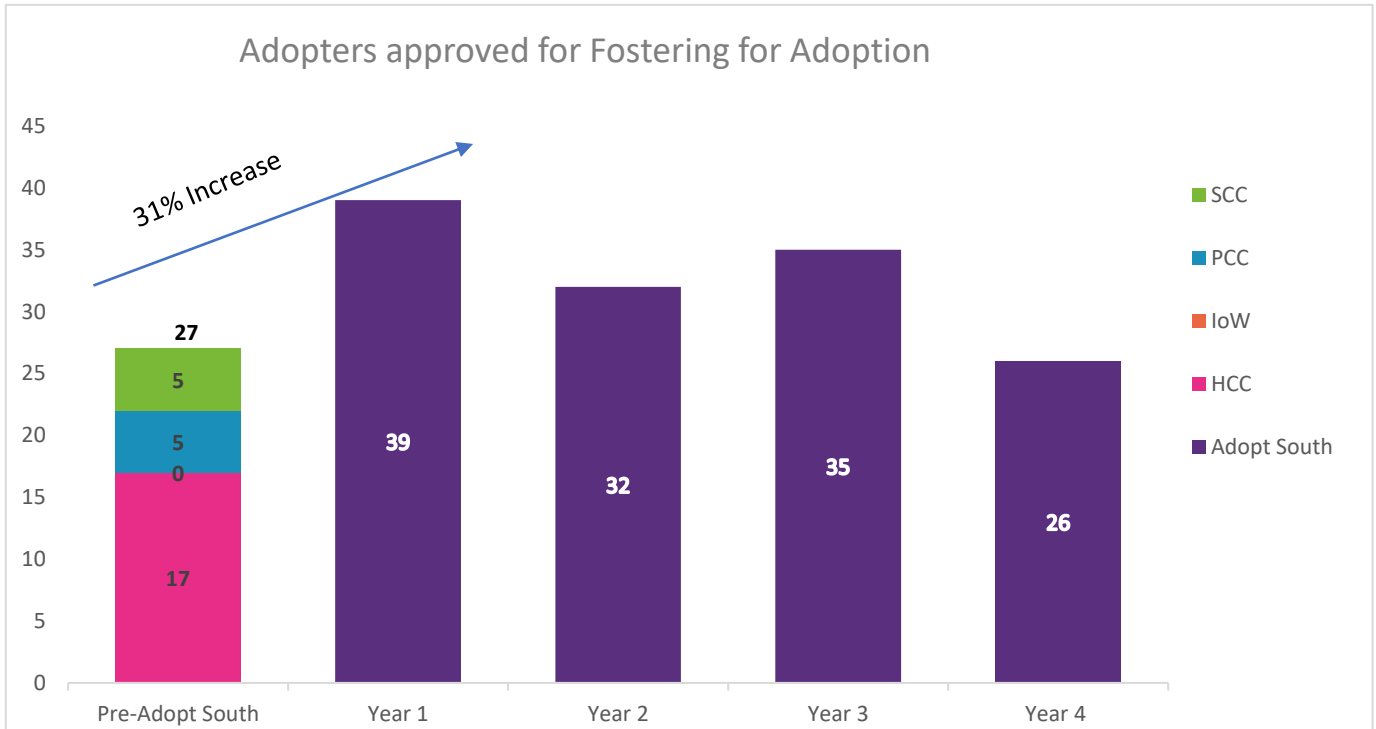
Commentary:

- 94 new adoptive households were approved during Adopt South’s fourth year. Whilst this is 16 less of our annual target (achieved 85%), targeted marketing this year has continued to increase the number of households suitable to adopt sibling groups and hard-to-place children.
- 101 new adoptive households were approved during Adopt South’s third year, just nine less (92%) than our annual target of 110.
- The number of adopters approved increased by an average of 29% from Pre-Adopt South to the end of Year 2. (A total of 92 adoptive households were approved Pre-Adopt South, compared to 121 in Year 1 and 117 in Year 2).
- 433 adoptive households have, therefore, been approved since the launch of Adopt South, providing greater choice of matching.
- ***The ASGLB data (April 2020- March 2021) shows that Adopt South approved the second highest number of adopters out of all 31 RAA’s between April 2020- March 2021.***
- ***The data for last year (April 2021- March 2022) shows similar comparisons. There are now 32 Regional Adoption Agencies and Adopt South approved the third highest number of adopters last year.***



Adopters approved for Fostering for Adoption (FfA)

Table 1.8



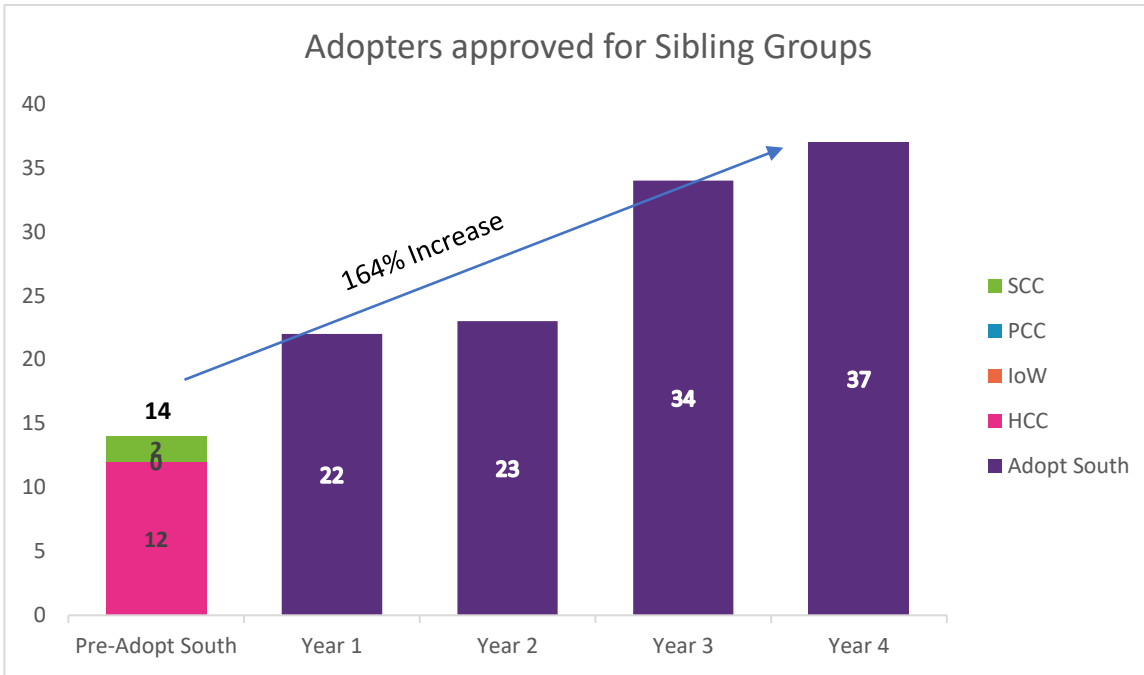
Commentary:

- Out of the 94 new adoptive households approved during Adopt South’s fourth year, 26 (28%) were approved for FfA.
- 35 (35%) were approved for FfA in Adopt South’s third year.
- 39 adopters were approved for FfA in Year 1 and 32 in Year 2, compared to 27 Pre-Adopt South, an average increase of 31%.
- In addition to increased stability and reduced number of placements for an adoptive child, there is a reduction of costs.

Adopters approved for Sibling Groups



Table 1.9



Commentary:

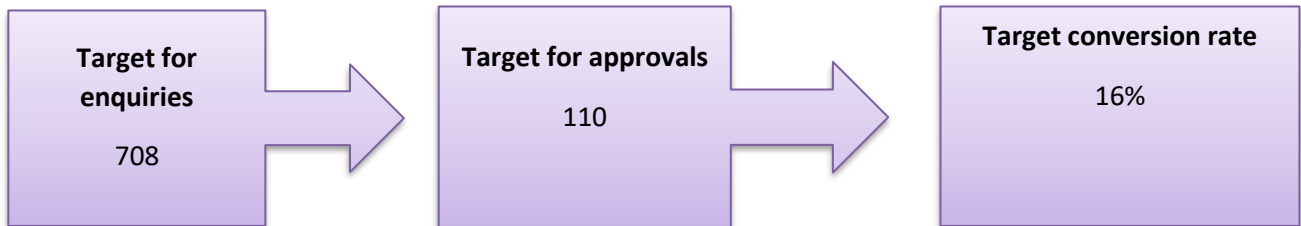
- Out of the 94 new adoptive households approved during Adopt South’s fourth year, 37 (39%) were approved for Sibling Groups, which evidences a continued increase year on year since Adopt South began.
- 34, out of the 101 approved, (34%), were approved for Sibling Groups in Year 3.
- 22 adopters (out of the 121 approved) were approved for Sibling Groups in Year 1 and 23 (out of the 117 approved) in Year 2, compared to 14 Pre-Adopt South, an average increase of 61%.
- The IOW and PCC did not approve any for Sibling Groups Pre-Adopt South.
- ***Specifically targeting to recruit adopters for sibling groups has continued to have much success, with inhouse families being identified for 37 sibling groups in Year 3 and inhouse families being identified for 38 sibling groups during Year 4.***



Enquiry to Approval Conversion Rates

Table 1.10

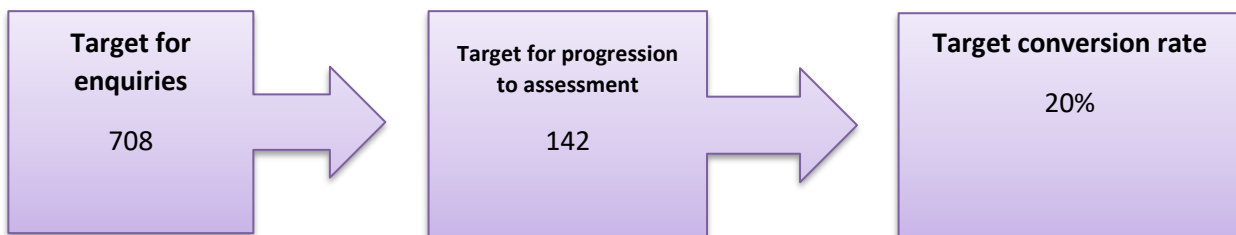
Target enquiry to approval - per year



Actual enquiry to approval – per year



Target enquiry to assessment – per year



Actual enquiry to assessment – per year





Target assessment to approval - per year



Actual assessment to approval – per year



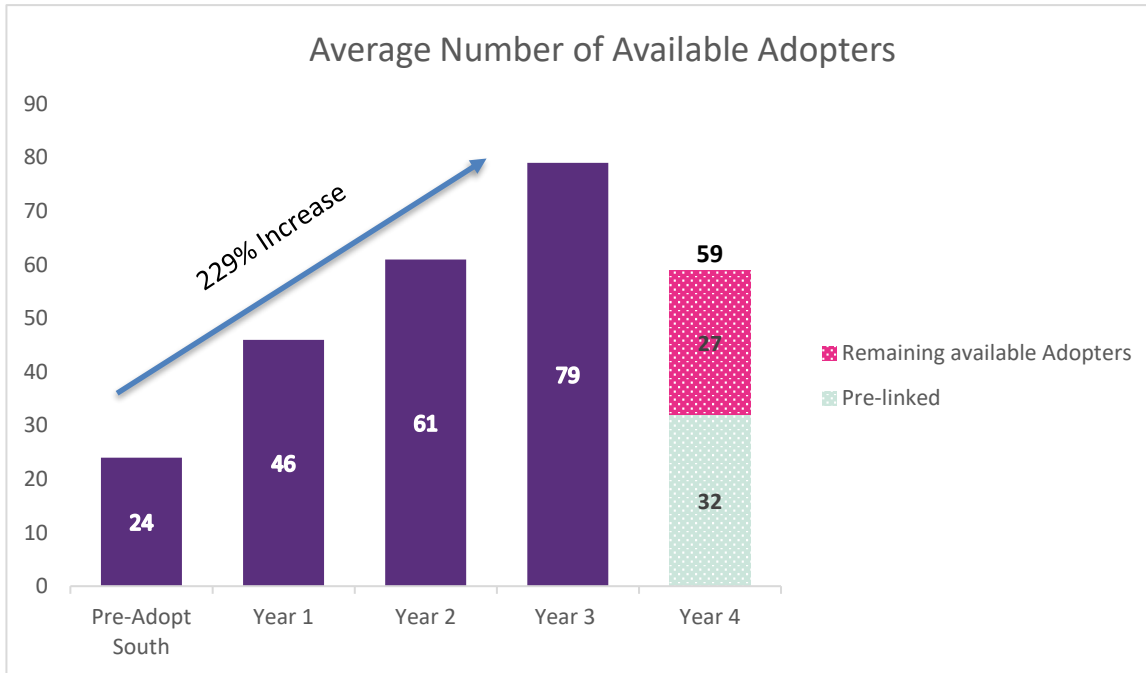
Commentary:

- **The Average Enquiry to Assessment Conversion Rate was above target at 24%, against a target of 20%, during Adopt South’s fourth year.**
- The target conversion rates allow for a 20% closure rate in Stage 1 and a 3% closure rate in Stage 2.
- Average Enquiry to Approval Conversion Rate for Adopt South’s first two years was 17%, compared to 9% Pre-Adopt South.
- Average Enquiry to Approval Conversion Rate for Adopt South’s third year was 14% against a target of 19% and is 13% for Year 4 against a target of 16%.
- The slightly lower conversion rate in Year 3 and Year 4 reflects our change in messages and only progressing with prospective adopters who are able to consider the children we have waiting, siblings, older children and children with complex needs.



Available Adopters

Table 1.11



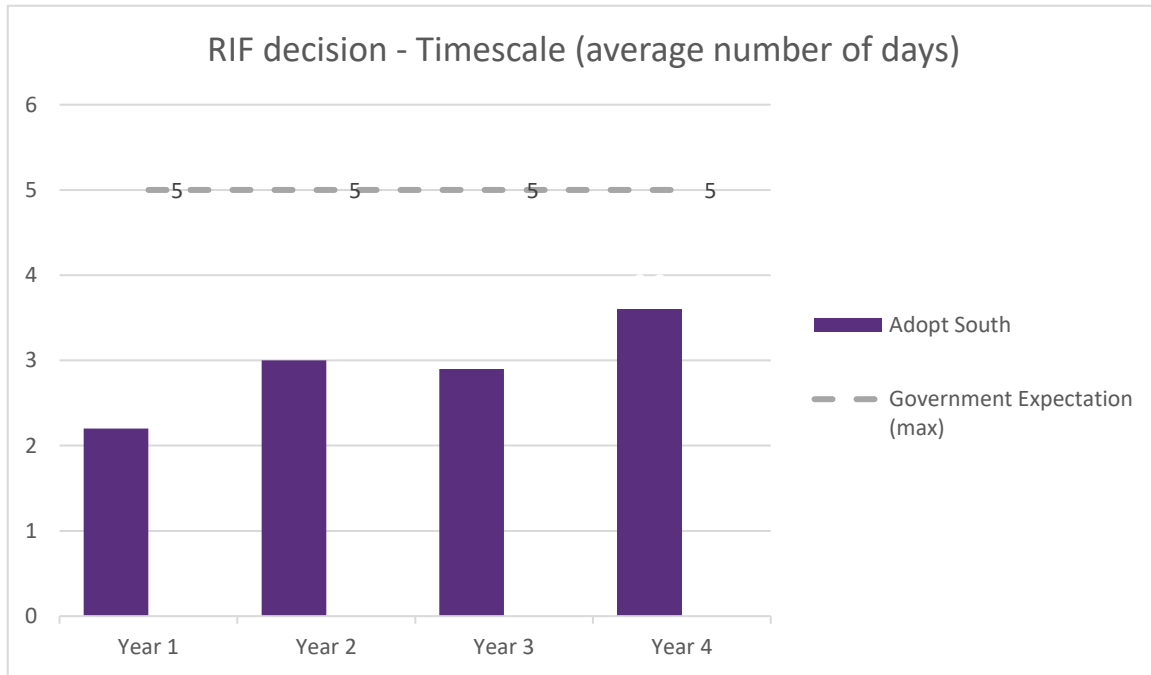
Commentary:

- At the end of Adopt South’s fourth year, 59 adopters were available. However, 32 of these have been pre-linked with children either with Placement Orders or awaiting Placement Orders.
- At the end of Year 2, there were 61 adopters available compared to 24 at the inception of Adopt South, an average increase of 123%.
- This increased to 79 at the end of Year 3. However, 32 of these had been pre-linked.
- A larger pool of adopters has increased choice and has led to better matches for children, reducing the need to purchase adopters externally.



Timescales- Registration of Interest Form (RIF)

Table 1.12



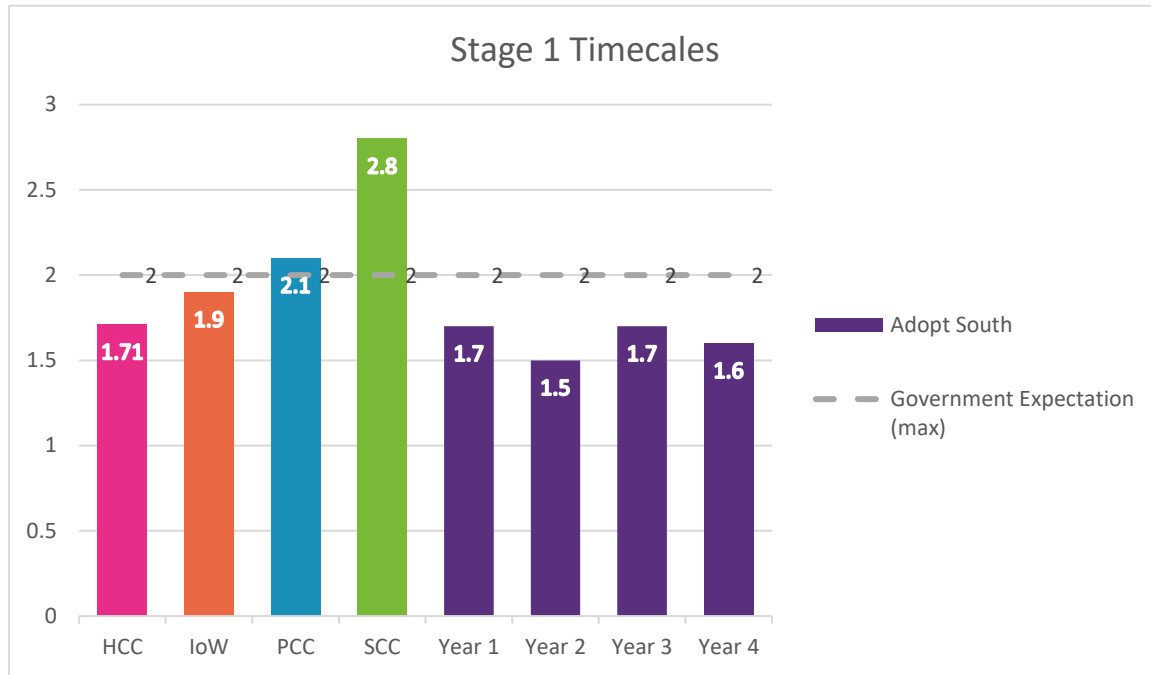
Commentary:

- Registration of Interest Form timescales have continued to average well within government timescales during Adopt South’s fourth year (3.6 days).
- Similarly, Adopt South’s first, second and third years averaged well within the government timescale of 5 days.
- ***The ASGLB data (April 2020- March 2021) shows that Adopt South was the only RAA out of all 31 RAA’s who met the 5-day timescale between April 2020- March 2021. The data for last year (April 2021- March 2022) shows that Adopt South continued to be the only RAA who achieved Enquiry to Registration of Interest in the 5-day timescale last year.***



Timescales - Stage 1

Table 1.13



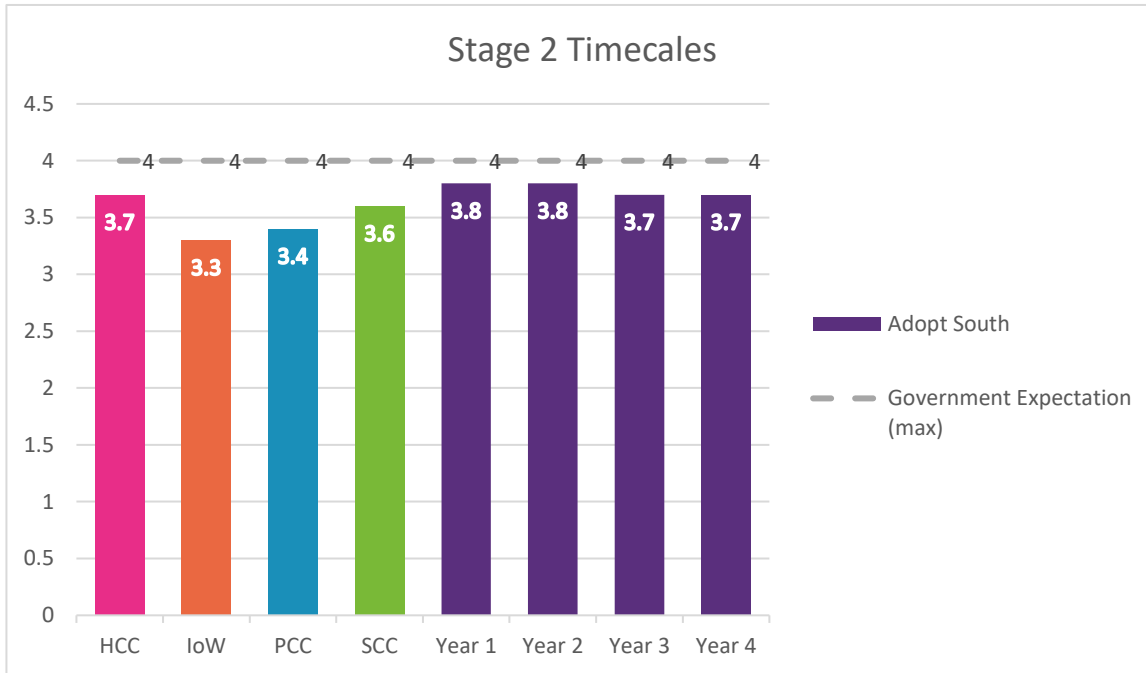
Commentary:

- Stage 1 timescales have continued to average well within government timescales during Adopt South’s fourth year (1.6 months).
- Similarly, Stage 1 timescales averaged well within government timescales during Adopt South’s first, second and third years.
- PCC and SCC averaged outside of timescales Pre-Adopt South.
- ***The ASGLB data (April 2021- March 2022) shows that out of the 32 Regional Adoption Agencies, Adopt South was the only RAA who achieved Stage 1 in the 2-month timescale last year.***



Timescales - Stage 2

Table 1.14



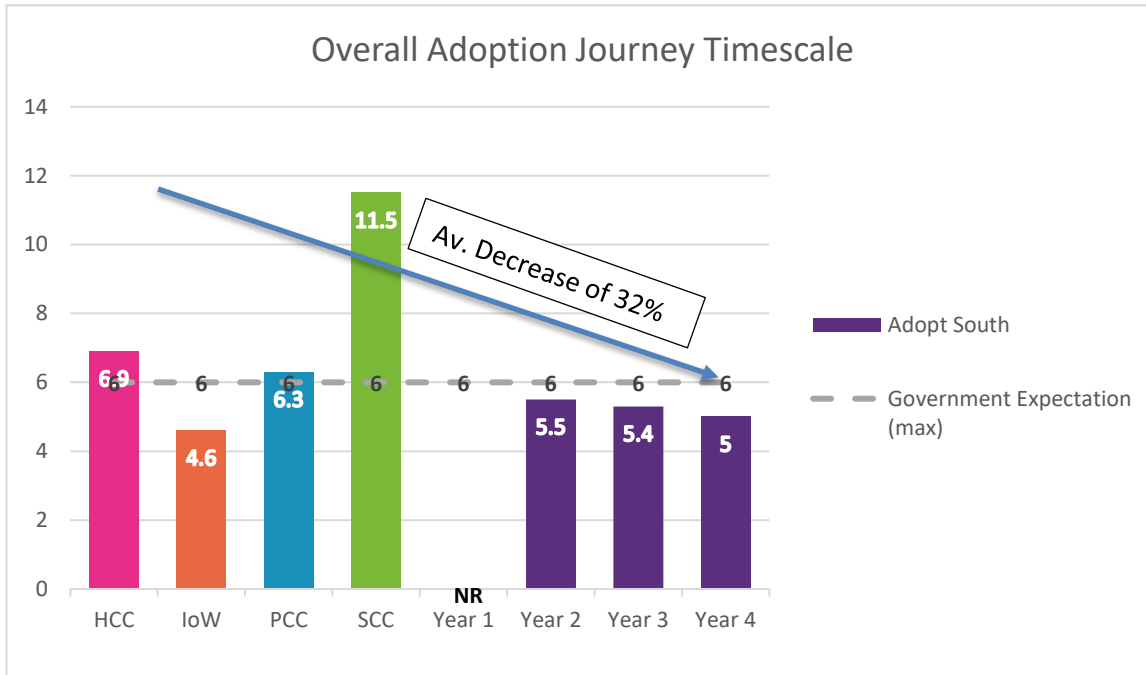
Commentary:

- Stage 2 timescales have continued to average well within government timescales during Adopt South’s fourth year (3.7 months).
- Similarly, Stage 2 timescales averaged well within government timescales during Adopt South’s first, second and third years.
- ***The ASGLB data (April 2021- March 2022) shows that last year, Adopt South was 1 out of just 4 RAA’s who averaged Stage 2 in the 4-month timescale. We continued to be the only RAA who achieved both Stage 1 and Stage 2 in timescales.***



Timescales- Overall Adoption Journey

Table 1.15



Commentary:

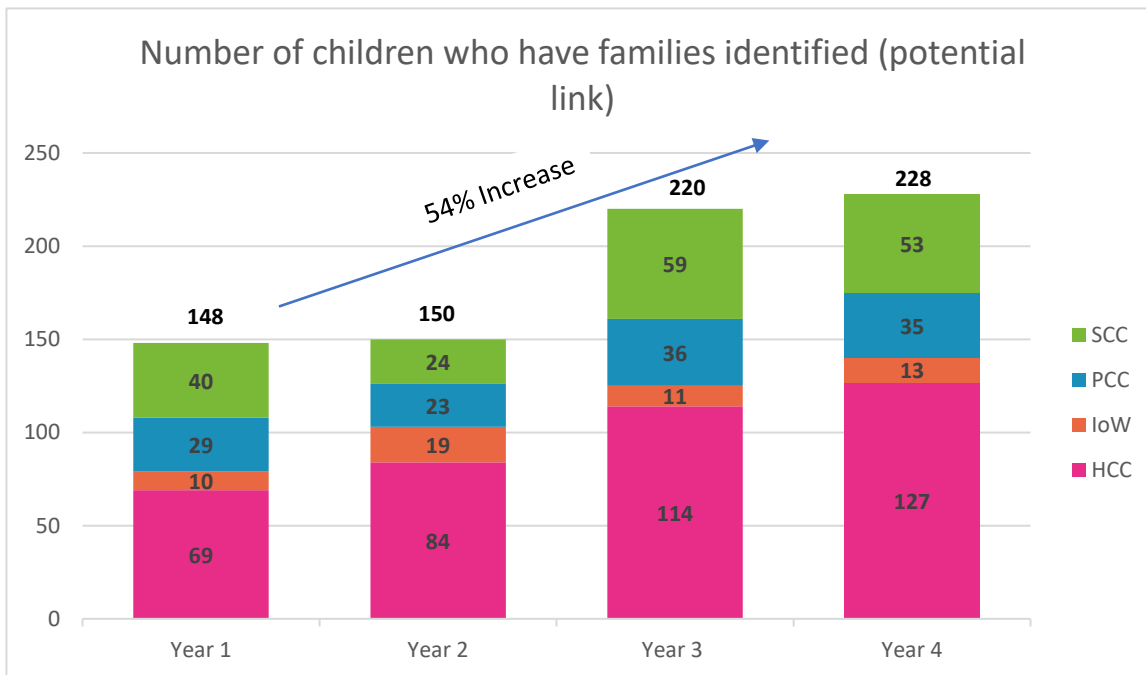
- The overall adoption journey continued to average well within government timescales during Adopt South's fourth year (5.0 months).
- Similarly, the overall adoption journey averaged well within government timescales during Adopt South's second and third years.
- ***The ASGLB data for last year (April 2021- March 2022) shows that Adopt South adopters had the shortest adoption journey from enquiry to approval than any other RAA.***



Family Finding

Children who have had families identified

Table 2.1



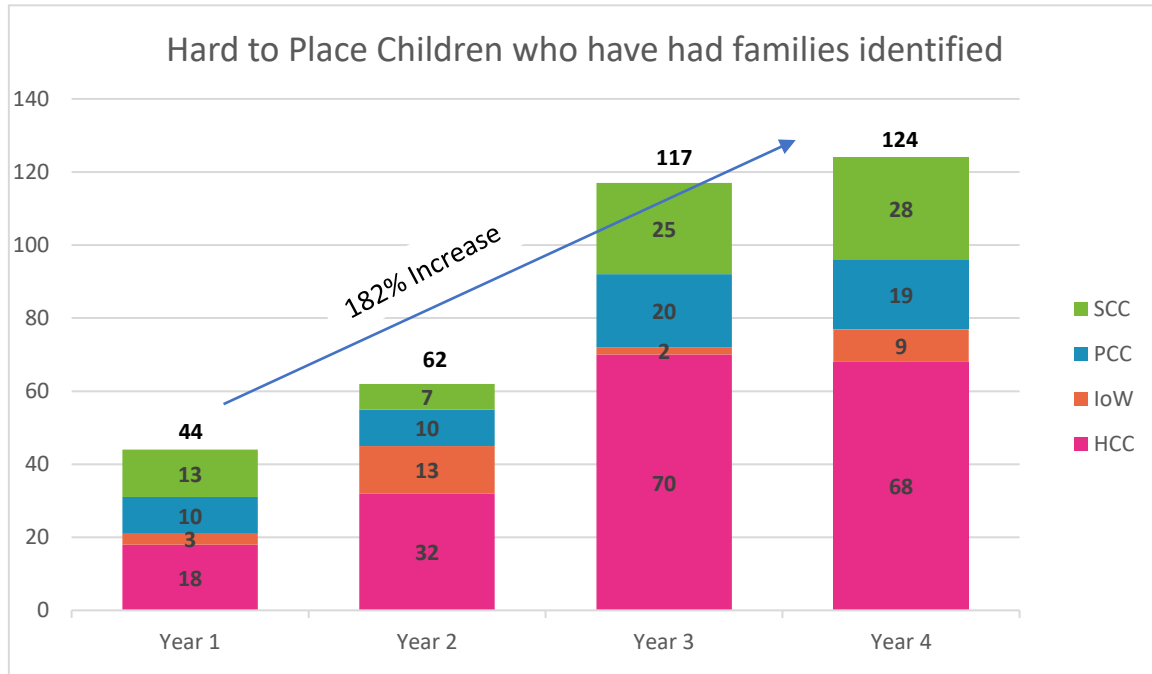
Commentary:

- **228** children had families identified during Adopt South’s fourth year. This includes both potential matches and those that have been confirmed or progressed to panel. (Out of the 228 identified matches, 150 have been confirmed/progressed to panel).
- This compares to **220** children having families identified during our third year; **150** during our second year, and **148** during our first year.



Hard to Place Children who have had families identified

Table 2.2



Commentary:

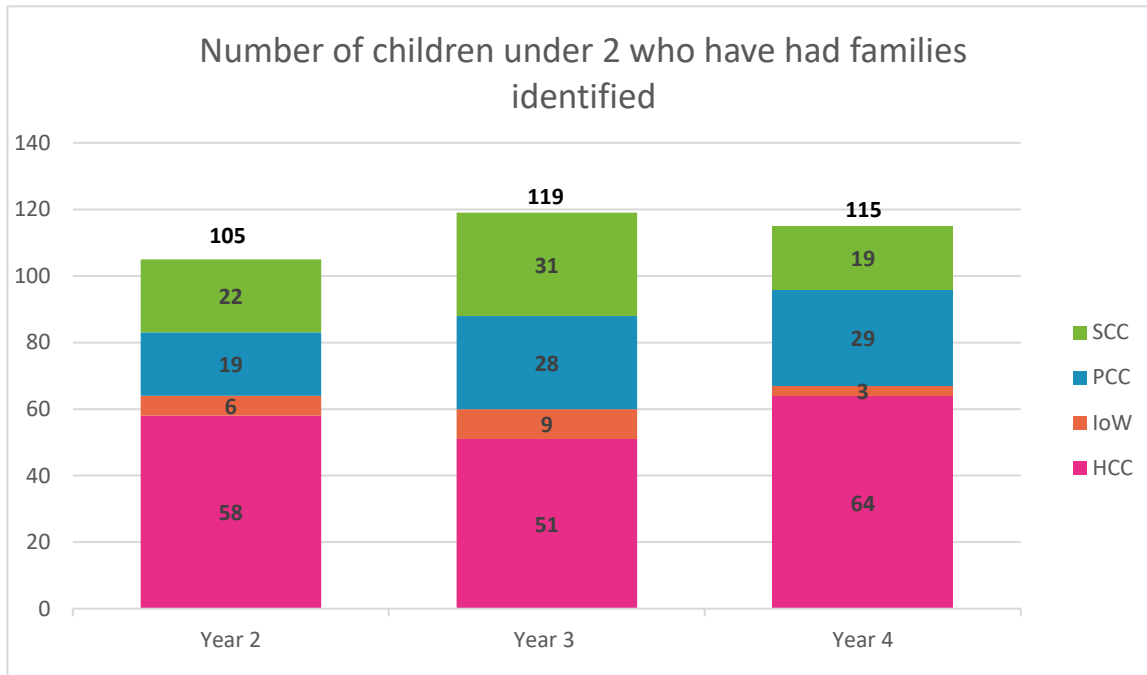
- Of the 228 children who had families identified during Adopt South’s fourth year, **124** were Hard to Place, including 38 sibling groups and 20 children over the age of 5 years. Similarly, these include both potential matches and those that have been confirmed or progressed to panel.
- Of the 220 children who had families identified during Adopt South’s third year, **117** were Hard to Place, including 37 sibling groups and 18 children over the age of 5 years.
- This compares to identifying families for **62** children who were Hard to Place (out of the 150 children) in Year 2 and **44** (out of the 148) in Year 1.



Ages of Children who have had families identified

Number of Children under the age of 2 years

Table 2.3



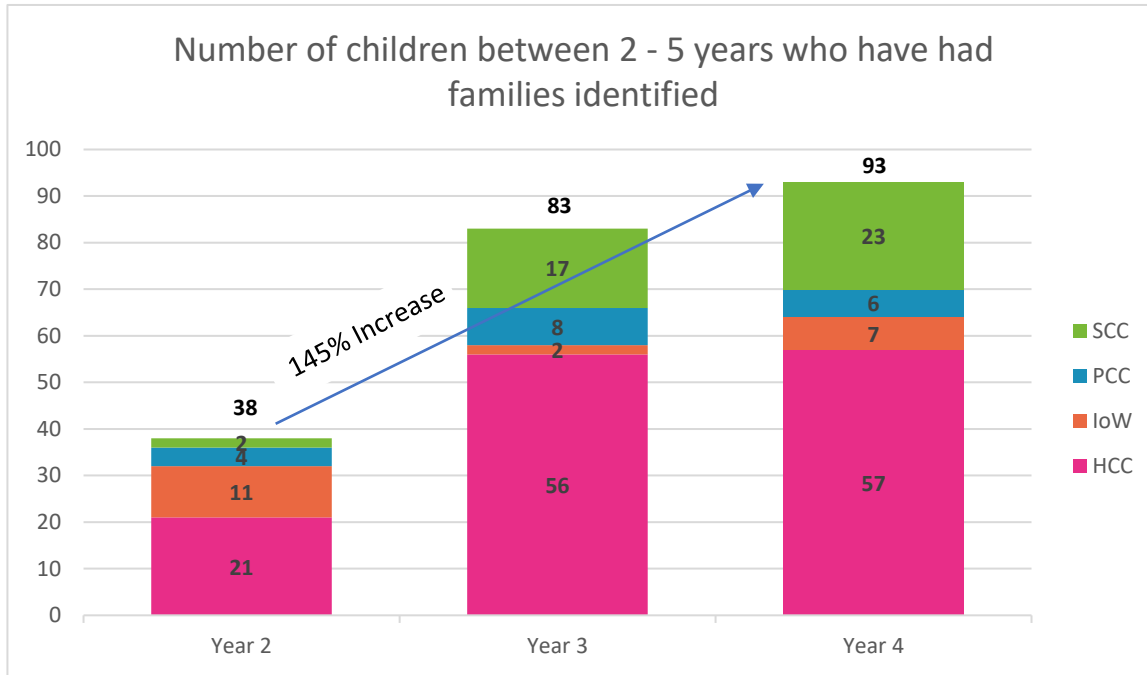
Commentary:

- **115** children under the age of 2 had families identified during Adopt South’s fourth year.
- This compares to **119** children under the age of 2 having families identified during Adopt South’s third year and **105** children during Adopt South’s second year.



Number of Children between 2 – 5 years

Table 2.4

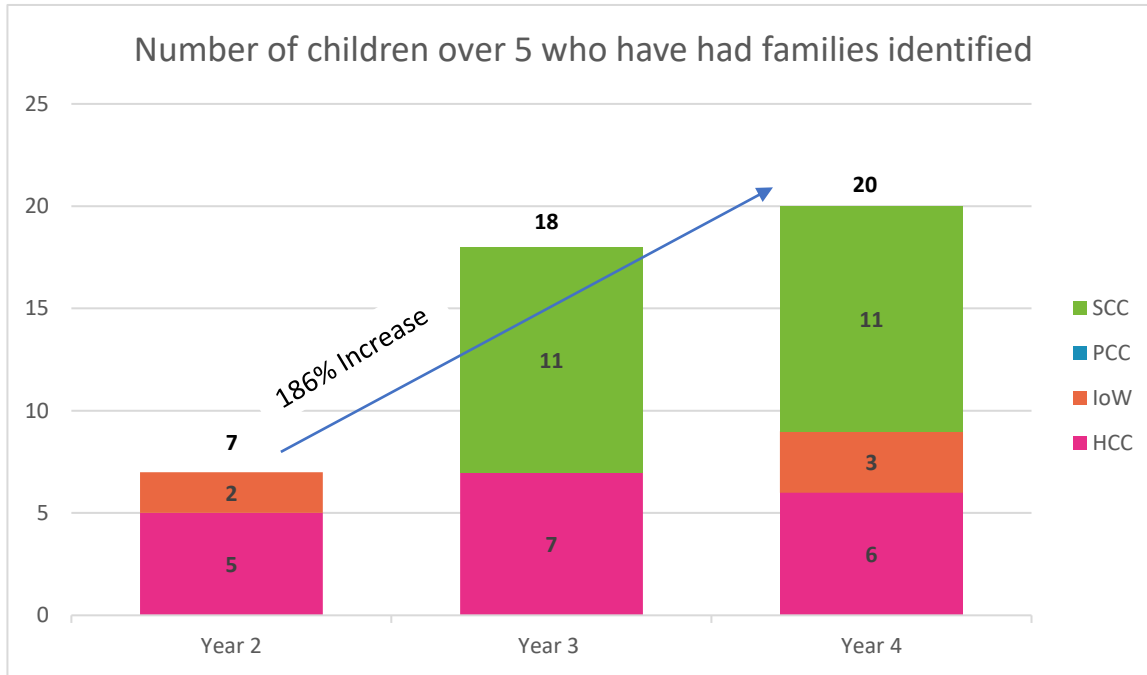


Commentary:

- **93** children between 2- 5 years had families identified during Adopt South’s fourth year.
- This compares to **83** children between 2- 5 years having families identified during Adopt South’s third year and **38** children during Adopt South’s second year.

Number of Children over 5 years

Table 2.5



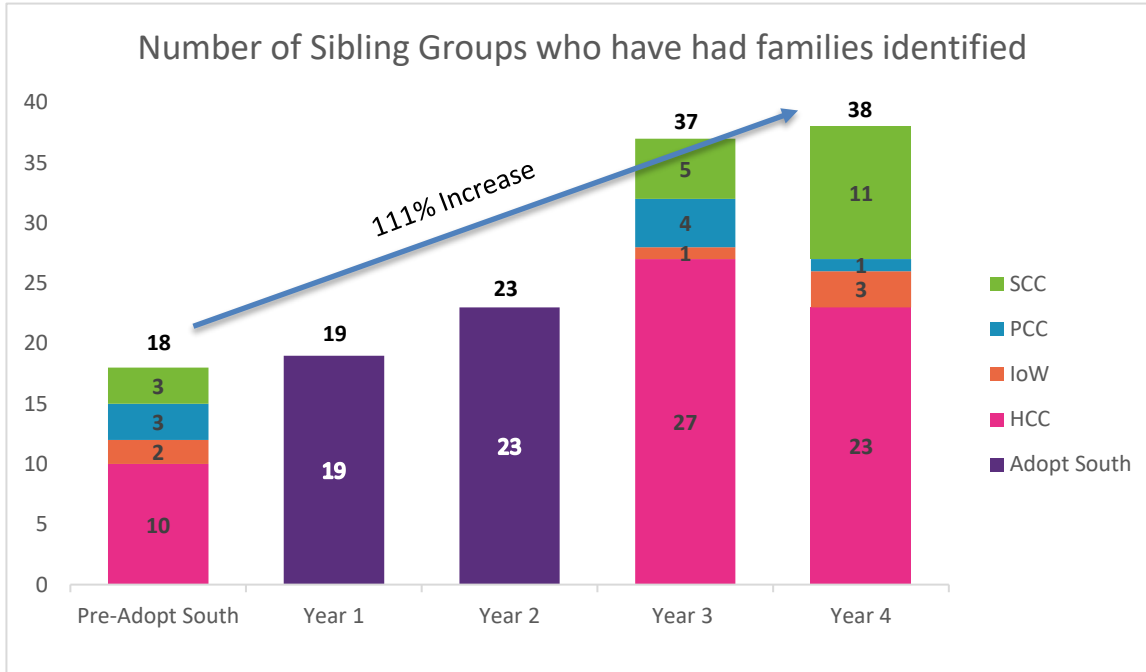
Commentary:

- **20** children over the age of 5 years had families identified during Adopt South’s fourth year. (Out of the 20 identified matches, 16 have been confirmed/progressed to panel).
- This compares to **18** children over the age of 5 years having families identified during Adopt South’s third year and **7** children during Adopt South’s second year.



Number of Sibling Groups who have had families identified

Table 2.6



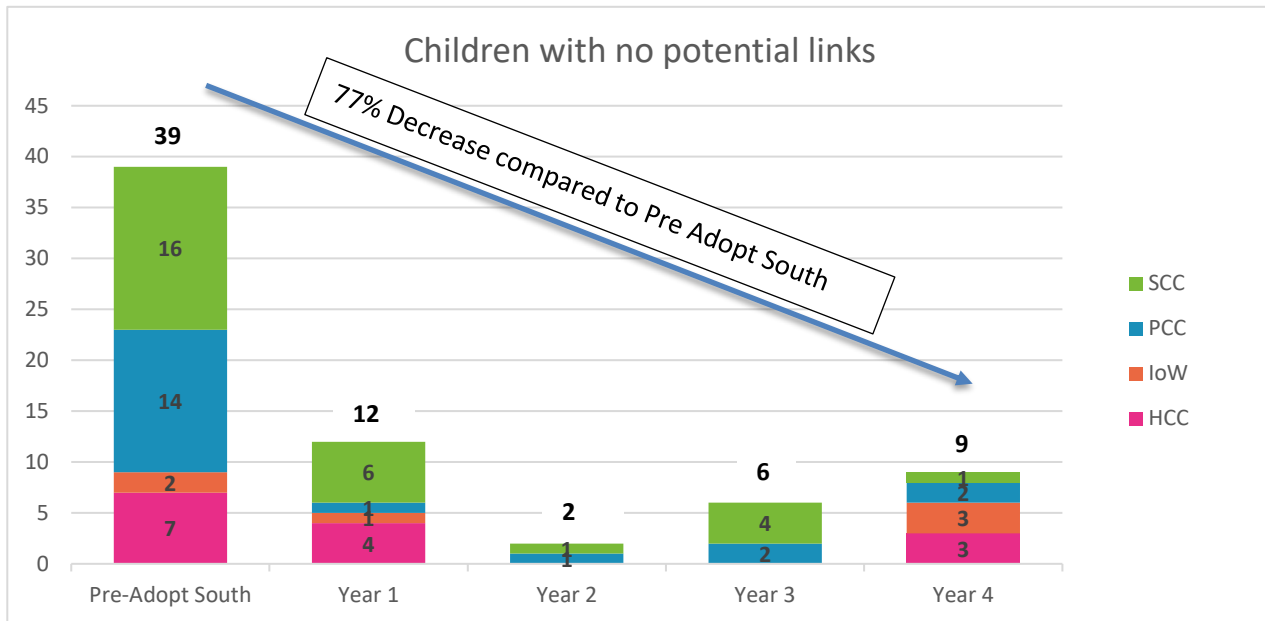
Commentary:

- There has continued to be a steady trend of increasing sibling groups, which has continued during Adopt South's fourth year, with **38** sibling groups having families identified, **7** with a sibling group of 3. (Out of the 38 identified matches for sibling groups, 21 sibling groups have been confirmed/progressed to panel, including 4 sibling groups of 3).
- **37** sibling groups had families identified during Adopt South's third year, **23** sibling groups during Adopt South's second year and **19** in our first year.
- There is a significant challenge nationally to recruit adopters for siblings.
- Additional costs include a higher need for Adoption Support.
- ***Specifically targeting to recruit adopters for sibling groups has continued to have much success as we have ended our fourth year, with 39% of new adoptive households being approved for siblings.***



Children with no potential links

Table 2.7



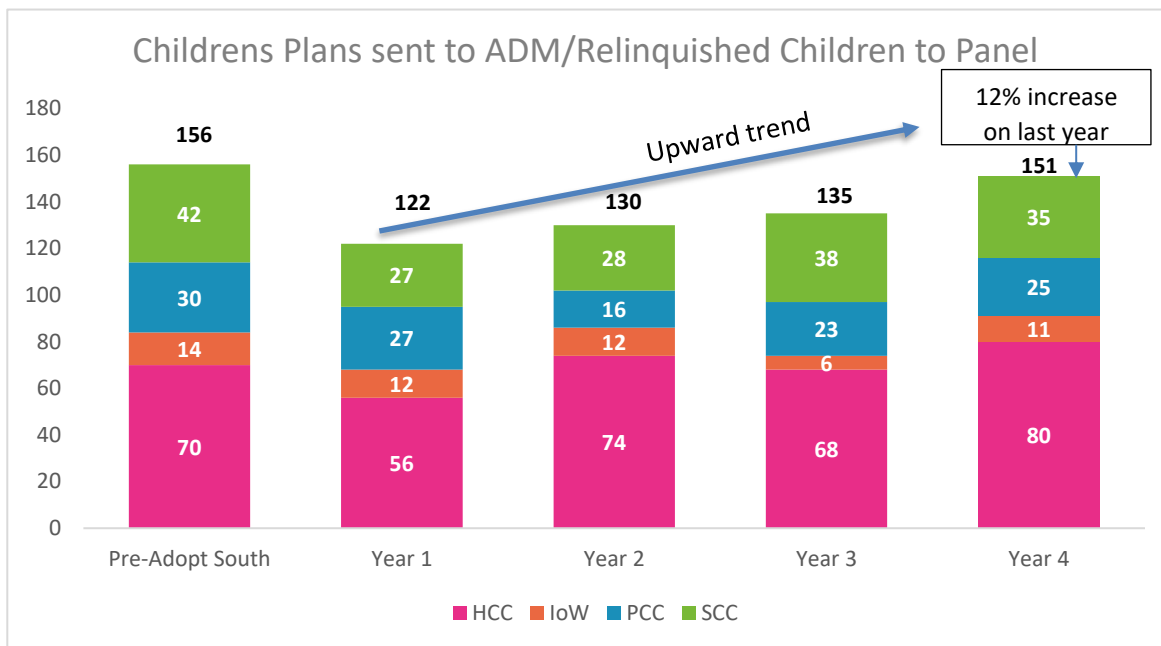
Commentary:

- There are just 9 children with Placement Orders who currently have no potential links. This includes two sibling groups of three male children (HCC – 1 sibling group; IoW – 1 sibling group). There are also three single children which include a 6-year-old; all have complex or medical needs.
- At the inception of Adopt South, there were 39 children who had no potential matches. This reduced to 12 at the end of Year 1 and to just 2 at the end of Year 2, an average reduction of 82%.
- At the end of Quarter 2, Year 3, this increased to 15, due to the high number of sibling groups referred. However, the strategies implemented have had a positive impact and the number of children without potential links reduced to 6 at the end of Year 3 (seeing 15 sets of siblings proceed to confirmed matches during the last two quarters of Year 3). A further 21 sets of siblings (including four sibling groups of 3) have proceeded to confirmed matches during Year 4.
- ***The ASGLB data (April 2020- March 2021) shows that Adopt South had the lowest number of children waiting out of all 31 RAA's.***

Children’s Information: Children’s Plans to Adoption Order

Children’s Plans referred to ADM/Relinquished Children to Panel

Table 3.1



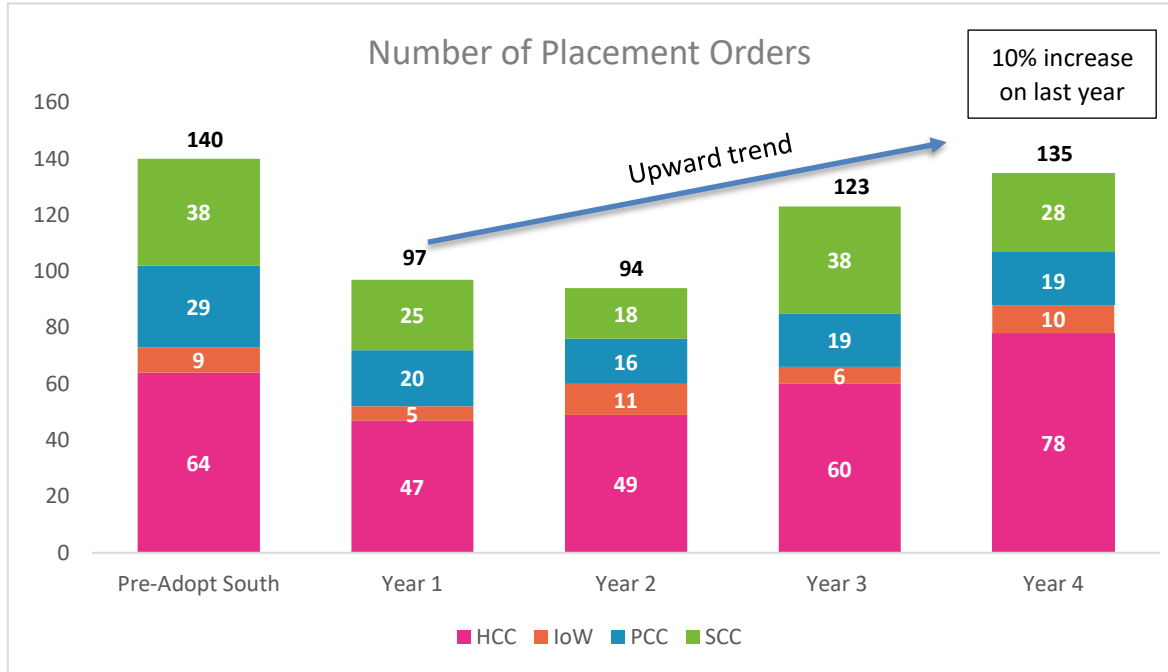
Commentary:

- Year 4 has seen a significant increase in Children’s Plans, with 151 being referred to the Agency Decision Maker (ADM) across the region, compared to 135 last year.
- Hampshire and the Isle of Wight have seen the steepest increase. Hampshire has had 80 Children’s Plans referred during the year, compared to 68 last year, **an increase of 18%**. The Isle of Wight has had 11, compared to 6 last year, **an increase of 83%**.
- Although there was a reduction in Children’s Plans in Year 1 as was the national trend, Year 2 saw a rise. Adopt South’s third year continued to see a rise, with Southampton’s numbers seeing a particularly steep increase.
- Year 2 saw a rise especially for Hampshire from Year 1 to Year 2 of 41%.
- The LA Children’s Adoption Teams have continued to report an increase in Parallel Planning and a further increase in Children’s Plans is likely to follow.
- **The data for last year (April 2020- March 2022) shows that only 7 RAA’s had more ADM/Children’s Plans than Adopt South which gives an indication of how Adopt South fits with others in size.**



Summary of Placement Orders

Table 3.2



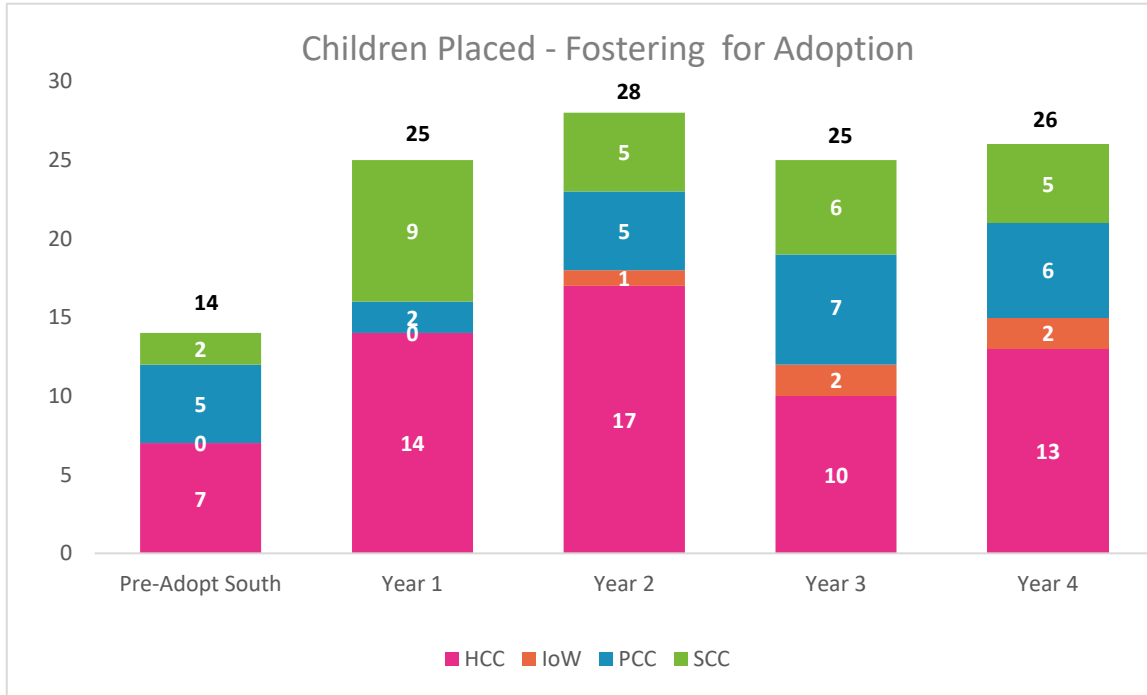
Commentary:

- There have been 135 Placement Orders granted during Year 4, compared to 123 last year.
- Hampshire and the Isle of Wight have seen steep increases. Hampshire has seen 78 Placement Orders granted during the last year, compared to 60 last year, **an increase of 30%**. The Isle of Wight has seen 10, compared to 6 during last year, **an increase of 67%**.
- Adopt South's third year saw a significant increase from the previous two years, with Hampshire and Southampton seeing especially high numbers, with 60 Placement Orders being granted in Hampshire and 38 in Southampton.
- COVID had impacted on the courts and cases had been delayed, which had led to Placement Orders not increasing in line with the rise in Children's Plans.
- The LA Children's Adoption Teams are continuing to report an increase in Parallel Planning and a further increase in Children's Plans and Placement Orders are likely to follow.



Children Placed- Fostering for Adoption

Table 3.3



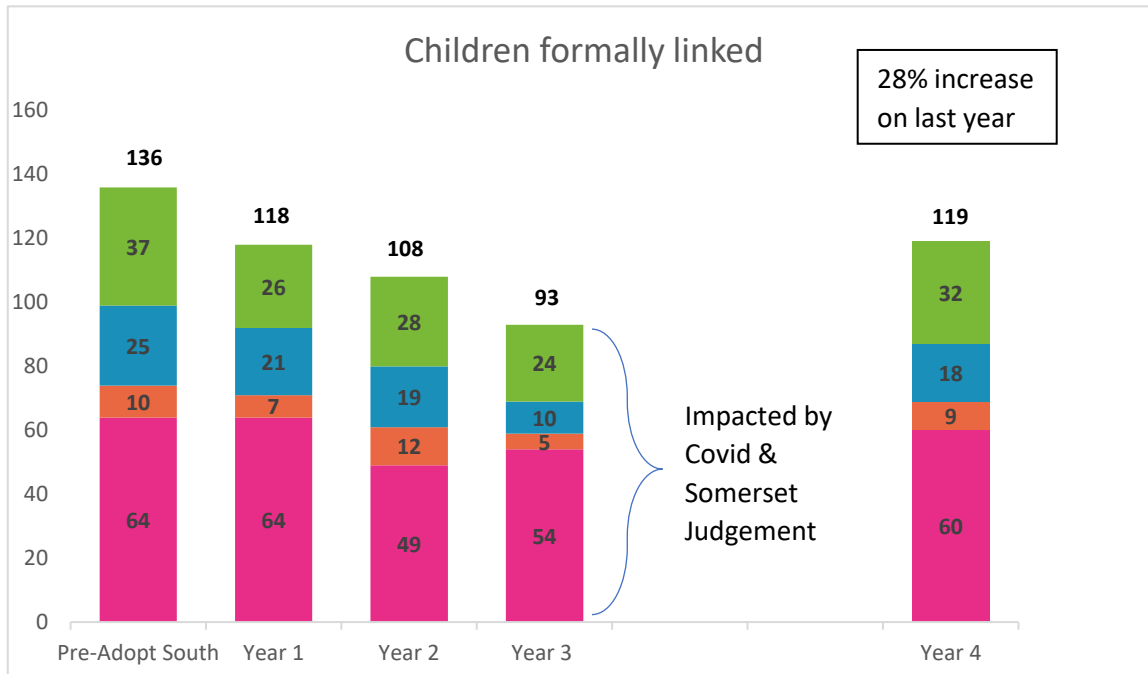
Commentary:

- 26 children have been placed in FfA placements during Year 4.
- This compares to 25 children being placed in a FfA placement during Adopt South’s third year.
- Although numbers were slightly lower during Year 3, there has been, overall, a continued rise in children being placed in FfA placements since the start of Adopt South.
- The impact for the LA is a freeing up of fostering placements and a reduced cost.
- ***The ASGLB data (April 2020- March 2021) shows that between April 2020 – March 2021, only two other RAA’s placed more children in FfA placements than Adopt South. The data for last year (April 2021- March 2022) shows similar comparisons. Only 5 RAA’s placed more children in FfA placements than Adopt South last year.***



Children formally linked

Table 3.4



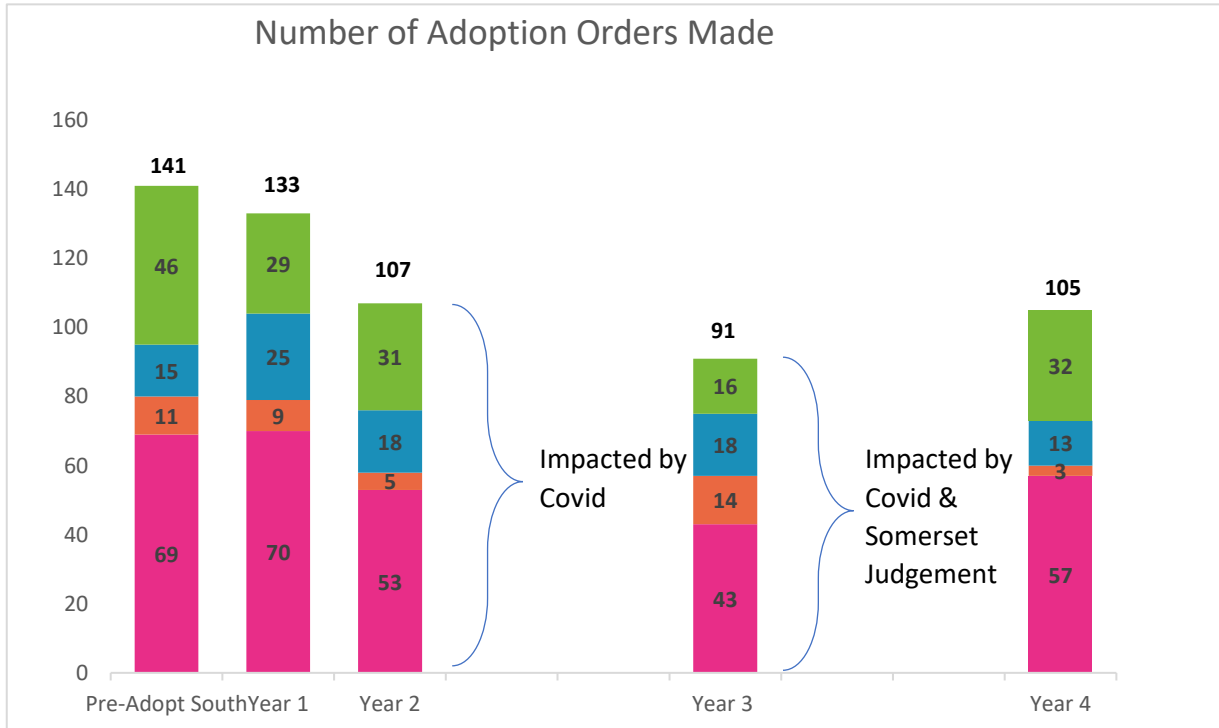
Commentary:

- **119 children were linked with 97 families during Adopt South's fourth year. This includes 19 sibling groups (16 sibling groups of 2, and 3 sibling groups of 3). It also includes 9 children over the age of 5 years (7- SCC; 1- HCC; 1- IOW), all linked with in- house adopters, except for a sibling group of 2.**
- This compares to 93 children linked with 77 adoptive families during Adopt South' third year.
- The number of children linked in Year 3 was impacted by the Somerset Judgement. In total, there were 18 cases paused for 19 children. These have all now been presented to Panel.
- 118 children were linked with 104 adoptive families in Year 1 and 108 children linked with 96 adoptive families in Year 2.
- **Since the launch of Adopt South, 438 children have been linked. Of these, 227 have been HCC children; 33 IOW children; 68 PCC children; 110 SCC children.**



Adoption Orders

Table 3.5



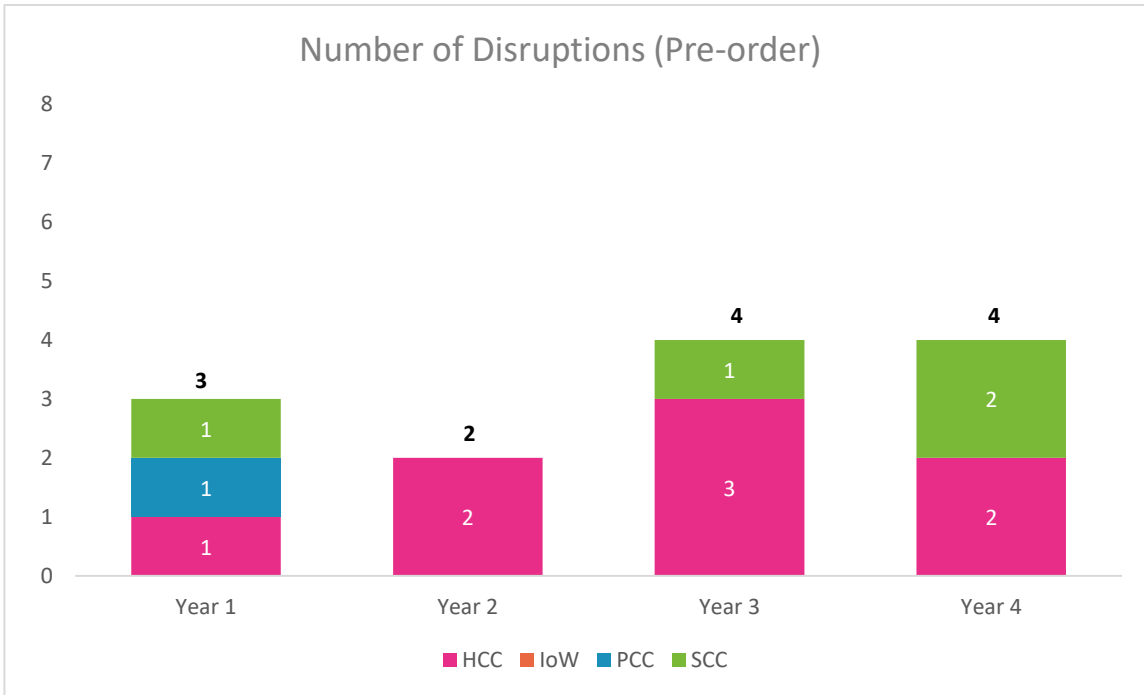
Commentary:

- 105 Adoption Orders were made across the region during Year 4, compared to 91 during Year 3.
- Adoption Orders have continued to be impacted by the courts only holding bi-monthly hearings.
- ***The ASGLB data for last year (April 2021- March 2022) shows that Adopt South had the lowest timescale out of all 32 RAA's from Placement to Adoption Order. (The Government expectation is 274 days- Adopt South averaged 198 days; England's average was 280 days).***

Disruptions - Pre-Adoption Order



Table 3.6



Commentary:

- There have been 4 disruptions during Adopt South’s fourth year.
- A 5-year-old placed with his 3-year-old brother where sadly the Prospective Adopters felt unable to manage the competing needs of the two children and struggled with the 5-year-old in particular. An updated sibling assessment concluded the brothers should be separated. The plan for the older child remains one of adoption with contact with his younger sibling.
- A brother and sister aged 5 and 6, who had been placed in two separate adoptive families. The Prospective Adopters felt unable to manage their complex behaviours and the care plans of both children are currently being reviewed.
- The further disruption concerned an older sibling who had been placed alongside their younger sibling. The Prospective Adopters felt unable to manage the older sibling’s challenging behaviours and the child’s care plan is, similarly, now being reviewed.
- There were 4 disruptions (1 sibling group of 2 and 2 single children) during Adopt South’s third year.
- A further sibling group of two remained with their adopters and although the placement didn’t disrupt, they had their care plan changed as the Prospective Adopters no longer felt able to adopt them.
- There were 2 disruptions during Adopt South’s second year and 3 disruptions during Adopt South’s first year.
- There have, therefore, been 13 disruptions since the launch of Adopt South, a disruption rate of 2.96% (13/438 children linked). Comparisons show that this is low, ie, HCC’s disruption rate



Pre-Adopt South was 3.1% (2/64 children linked); One Partnership RAA who are a similar size to Adopt South have advised of a 4.4% disruption rate in their first year (2020/2021), 4/96 children linked.

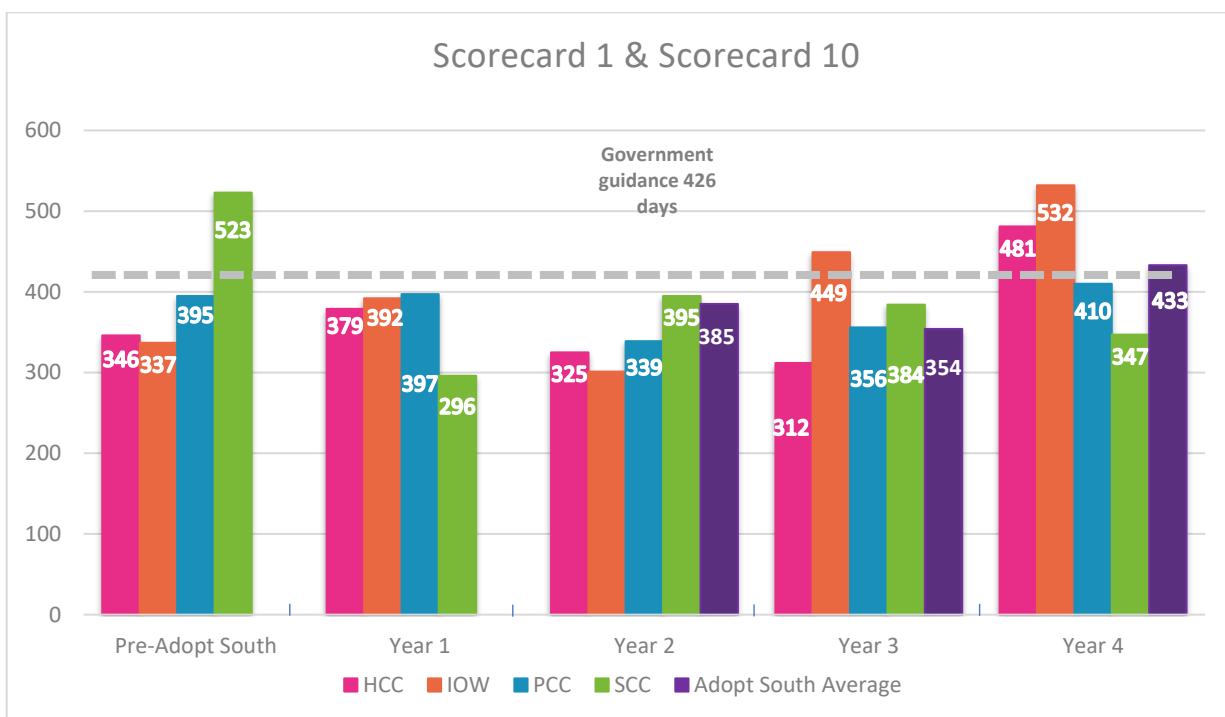


Comparison of Scorecard 1/Scorecard 10

Scorecard 1 - Average Time between the child entering care and moving in with their adoptive family. (no longer used)

Scorecard 10 - Average Time (in days) between a child entering care and moving in with their adoptive family, adjusted for foster carer adoptions, for children who have been adopted, and for Fostering for Adoption placements.

Table 3.7



Commentary:

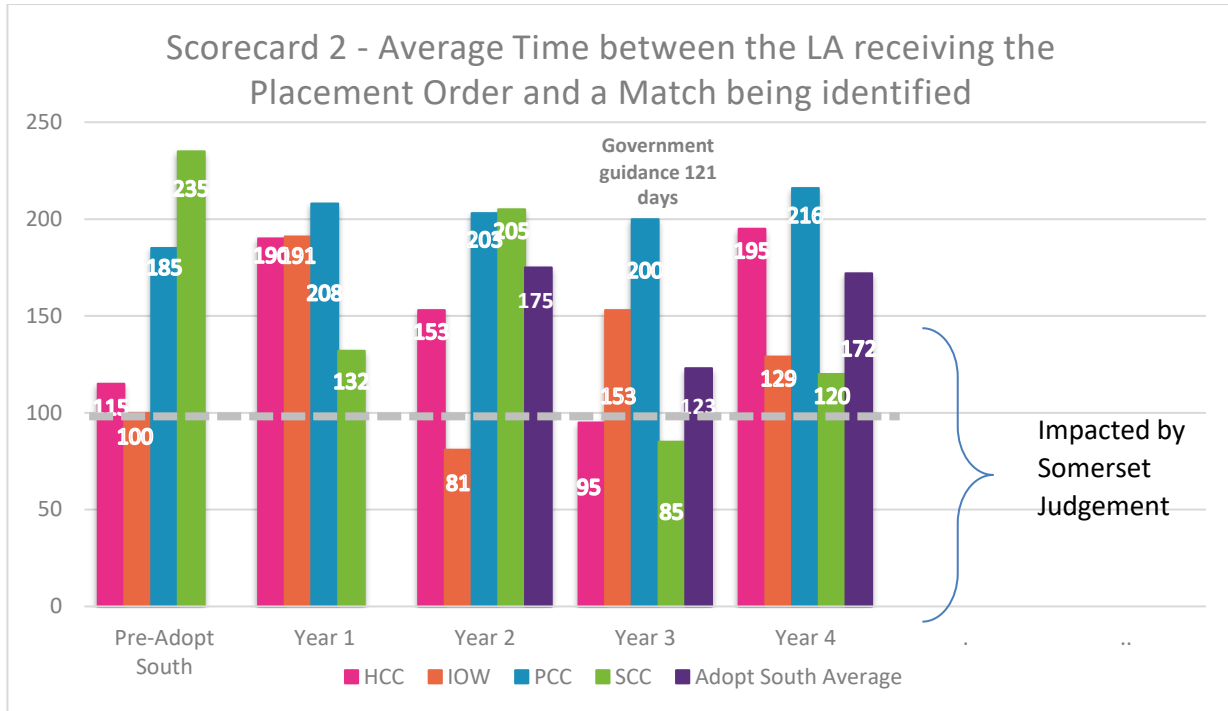
- Scorecard 1 has now been superseded with Scorecard A10. This new scorecard has been adjusted from Scorecard 1 to take into account foster carer adoptions and FfA placements.
- During Year 4, the average for all 4 LA's combined is 433 days, just seven days above the government guidance for Scorecard A10.
- Both Portsmouth and Southampton have averaged well within the government guidance.
- Hampshire averaged 55 days above the government guidance and the Isle of Wight 106 days above the guidance.
- The higher timescale for Hampshire is due to prolonged care proceedings for a number of children, in addition to delays due to the complexities of the children, including the increase in sibling groups and older children, where family finding has taken longer.

- The higher timescale for the Isle of Wight is due to just 3 children being adopted in Year 4, and one child having a care journey of 913 days, being made subject to a Care Order and then placed with his mother, firstly in a parent and child placement and then in the community. He remained looked after for the whole period.
- During Adopt South's third year, all the Local Authorities for Scorecard 10, averaged scorecards well below the government's guidance, with the exception of the Isle of Wight, who averaged just 23 days above the government's guidance. Hampshire and Southampton continued to see an improvement on the low scorecards of the previous year.
- The higher timescale for the Isle of Wight was due to one of the children who had an Adoption Order having cerebral palsy and it taking longer to find a family for him. The good news is that a family was found, and the Adoption Order now made.
- Adopt South's Year 3 saw an overall average across the 4 Local Authorities of 354 days for Scorecard 10, well below the government's guidance.
- Average timescales were well within the government guidance for all 4 Local Authorities during Adopt South's first and second year. The 4 Local Authorities together averaged 385 days in Year 2, significantly under the government guidance.
- SCC averaged timescales outside of the government expectation Pre-Adopt South.
- ***The ASGLB data (April 2021- March 2022) shows that Adopt South is 1 out of just 2 RAA's where Scorecard 1 is in timescale. (The last 3 years have been averaged for this timescale- rather than just 2021/22. The Government expectation is 426 days- Adopt South averaged 368 days. England's average was 445 days).***



Comparison of Scorecard 2

Table 3.8



Commentary:

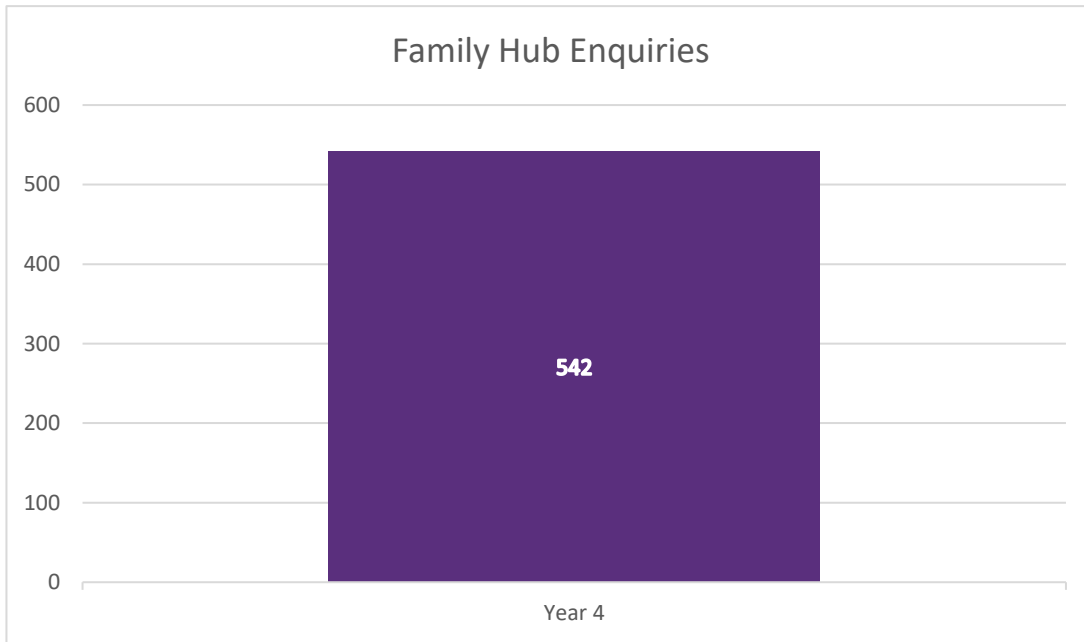
- During Year 4, the average for all 4 LA's combined is 172 days for Scorecard 2.
- Southampton has averaged within the government guidance.
- Hampshire and Portsmouth have averaged significantly above the government guidance, whilst the Isle of Wight has averaged just slightly above (8 days).
- The higher timescales for all three Local Authorities reflect the impact of the Somerset Judgement and placements being put on hold whilst the way forward was being addressed. The majority of the children were placed in Fostering for Adoption placements, however, and, therefore, their adoption journey's were not delayed.
- In addition, the delays have been due to the complexities of the children across all three Local Authorities, including the increase in sibling groups, older children and children with significant needs, where family finding has taken longer.
- During Adopt South's third year, Hampshire and Southampton averaged scorecards well below the government's guidance. The slightly higher scorecards for the Isle of Wight and Portsmouth reflected the hard-to-place children who although it took longer, families were found.
- Hampshire, Portsmouth and Southampton continued to see an improvement on their scorecards the previous year.

- Year 3 saw an average across the 4 Local Authorities of 123 days, just 2 days outside of the government’s guidance. This compared to 175 days in Year 2.
- ***The ASGLB data (April 2021- March 2022) shows that Adopt South was the 5th lowest for Scorecard 2. As with Scorecard 10, the last 3 years have been averaged for this timescale. (England’s average was 196 days; Adopt South averaged 163 days).***

Adoption Support- Family Hub Activity Referrals/Enquiries to Adopt South’s Advice and Support Line

Table 4.1





Commentary:

- The Advice and Support Line provides a main point of contact to adoptive families, adoptees, birth relatives and professionals across the region.
- A total of 542 enquiries have been received by the Family Hub during Adopt South’s fourth year.

Adoption Support Offer - Comparison Table

Table 4.2

	HCC	IOW	PCC	SCC	Adopt South
Dedicated adoption support duty line during office hours	✓				✓
Mentor system for post adoption parents	✓				✓



Virtual Reality	✓				✓
One off consultations- 36 across the county/region	✓				✓
Video Interaction Guidance	✓				✓
Educational Psychologist Consultation	✓	✓			✓
Support Groups	✓	✓	✓		✓
Adolescence 2 session programme -3 hours each				✓	✓
Understanding your child's world through play				✓	✓
Life story workshop	✓		✓	✓	✓
Managing challenging behaviour (bite size)				✓	✓
Therapeutic Parenting (bite size)				✓	
FASD Workshop (bite size)				✓	✓
Education Matters (bite size)				✓	✓
Feelings Workshop			✓		✓
Attachment and Trauma Bite Size				✓	✓
Talking about Adoption (bite size)			✓		✓
Internet safety (bite size)				✓	✓
Secondary Trauma (bite size)				✓	✓
Sensory Workshops			✓		✓
Theraplay workshop	✓				✓
Stay and Play sessions	✓				✓
Soft Play exclusive use	✓				✓
Social events for adoptive families	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Groundworks Fusion activities for young people - on average 3 a month	✓				✓
Parenting Programmes					
<i>Adopting Changes</i>	✓				✓
<i>Trauma Course</i>	✓				✓
<i>Knowing Me, Knowing You</i>	✓				✓
Nurturing Attachments					✓

Commentary:

- Year 4 has seen the new Family Hub commencing a scoping exercise with the adoption community to redesign a core and universal support offer that meets the most current needs of families in our region.



Family Hub events and services delivered in Year 4

Table 4.3

Service	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Parenting & Family Support				
Advice and Support Line one off advice & support	140	139	106	157
Parents attending virtual Q&A / Chat Sessions (monthly)	0	9	13	28
Parent Support Groups (offered monthly)	4	4	8	6
Virtual consultation Sessions (3 offered per month)	7	5	12	19
Families receiving direct work support	62	22	10	23
Families supported by an Adopt South Mentor	34	23	28	31
Workshops offered 3 x per year				
Setting Screen Time and Surviving Social Media Workshop	0	0	9	12
Attachment: Strengthening Relationships Workshop	7	0	8	8
Theraplay Workshop	0	15	0	6
Understanding Sensory Regulation Workshop	6	0	0	8
Terrific Teens Workshop	2	0	11	5
Our Lives Our Stories Workshop	6	11	0	8
Parenting Programmes				
Nurturing Attachments Programme	0	0	11	11
Adopting Changes Programme	0	12	0	0
Therapeutic Support				
Educational Psychologist Consultations	16	6	14	15
Video Interaction Guidance	15	1	0	0
Logins to Guest Speaker events	42	0	0	50
Family Activities (throughout the year)				
Parents & Children Under 5's Stay and Play Sessions	13	10	43	24
Soft Play Exclusive Use Sessions for under 12's	25	0	29	20
Groundworks Fusion Activities for Young People	0	0	2	8
Social Events for Adoptive Families	0	260	0	240

Commentary:

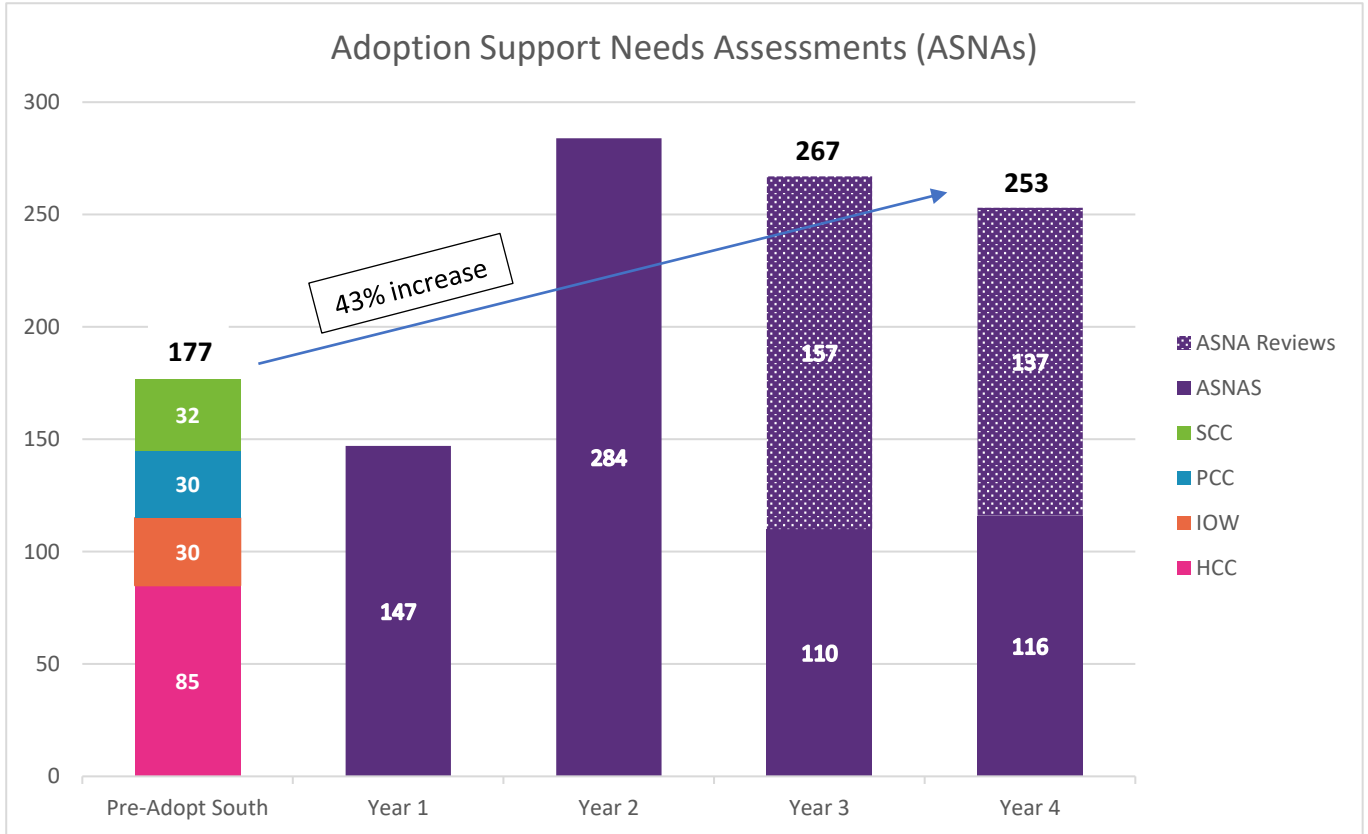
During Adopt South's Year 4;

- **542** new enquiries were received.
- **122** families accessed a workshop.
- Adopt South consultations have continued to be well used, with **43** consultations taking place.
- **92** parents attended virtual guest speaker webinars.

- *164 families have accessed a family activity event.*
- *51 Educational Psychologist consultations have been provided.*
- *500 parents and children attended our summer and winter Family Fun Days.*
- *34 parents have attended a therapeutic parenting programme.*
- *16 Video Interaction Guidance packages have been allocated.*
- *5 families attended a joint information event (with the Virtual School) on the Isle of Wight.*
- *10 Groundworks Fusion activities for young people have taken place.*
- *Access to 'Catch' online resources have been provided to Adopt South families.*

Adoption Support Needs Assessments (ASNA's), including ASNA Reviews

Table 4.4

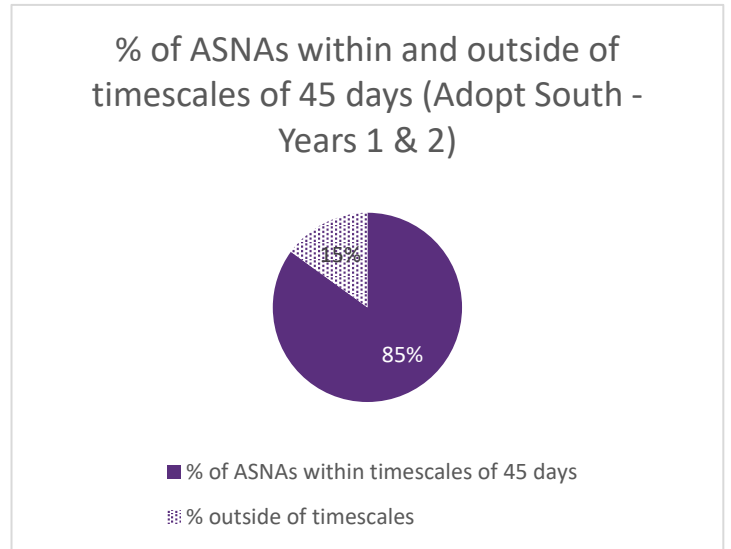
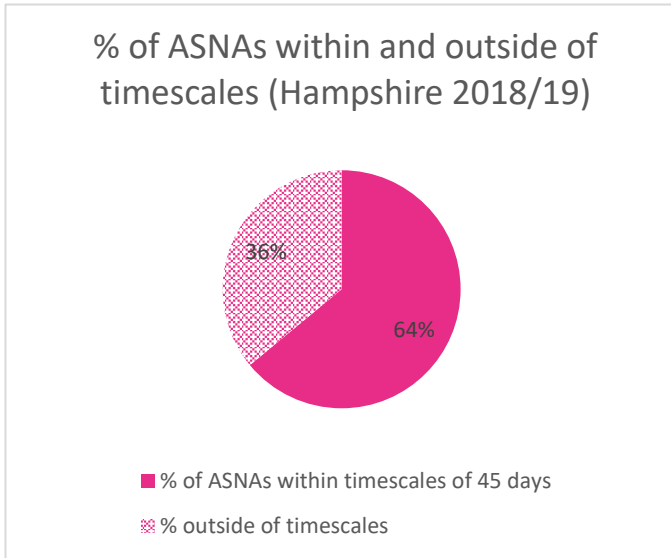


Commentary:

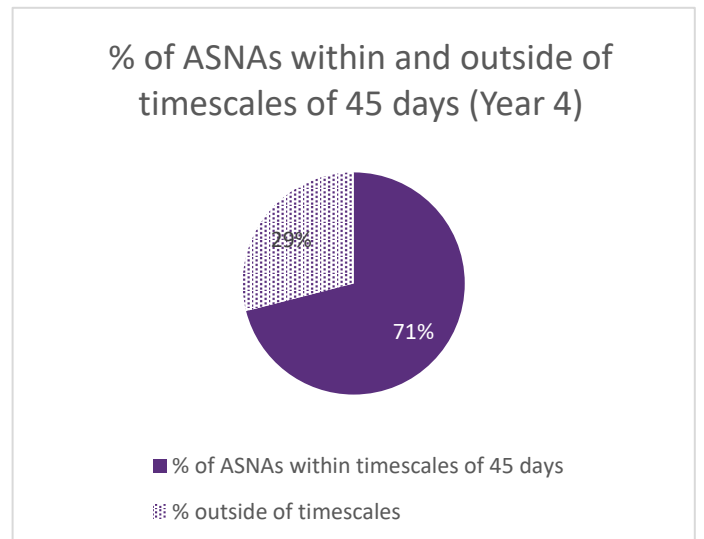
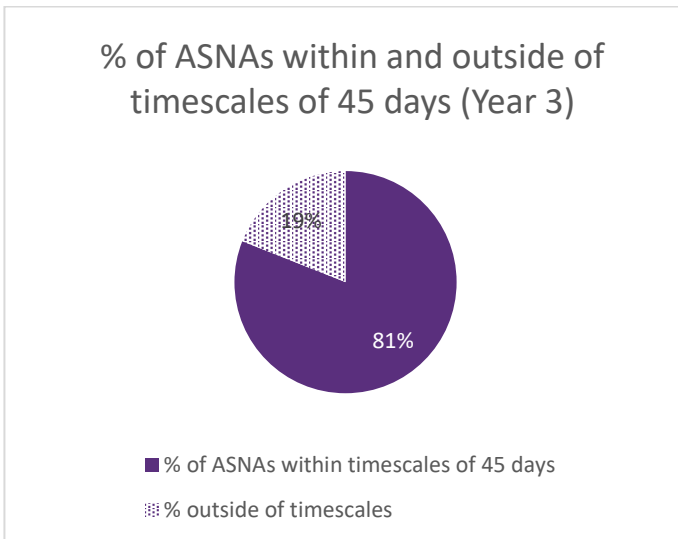
- During Adopt South's fourth year, 116 new Adoption Support Needs Assessments (ASNA's) were undertaken, a 5% increase from Year 3. 137 ASNA reviews were completed, a decrease of 13% from last year.
- A total of 253 ASNA and ASNA reviews were, therefore, completed in Year 4.
- At the end of Year 4, there were 387 adoption support cases open, an increase of 6% on last year, when 367 cases were open.
- A total of 493 children were allocated to a Social Worker within the year.

Adoption Support Needs Assessments – Timescales

Table 4.5



Hampshire was the only Local Authority measuring timescales prior to Adopt South



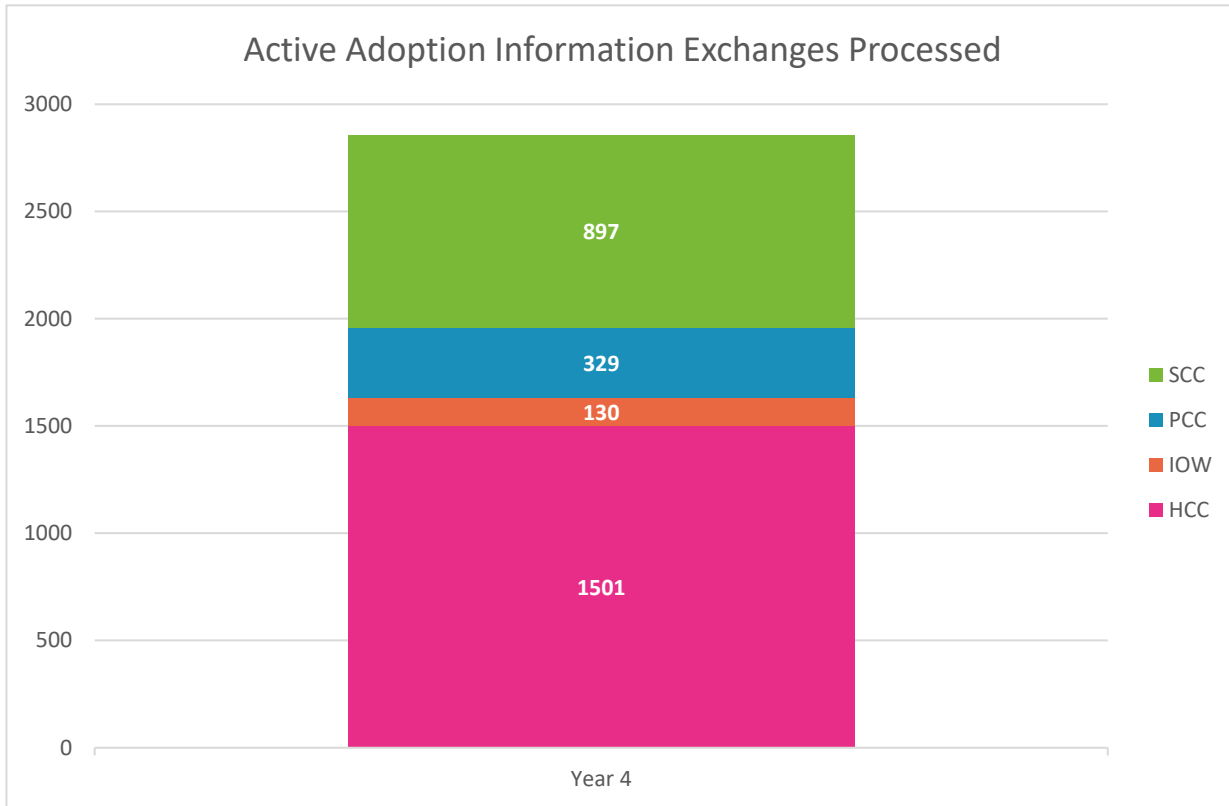
Commentary:



- During Adopt South's fourth year, 71% of ASNA's were completed within the 45-day timescale.
- Unfortunately, timescales dipped in Quarter 1 with only 59% completed within timescales.
- In Quarters 2, 3 and 4, there has been a real focus on expectations regarding timescales and a new tracking process put in place. As a result, there has been a significant improvement with 80% of ASNA's being completed within the 45-day timescale in Quarters 2 and 3, and 70% being completed within timescales in Quarter 4.
- A timely response to assessment and support reduces the number of cases that escalate to statutory teams across our partnership.
- The calculation of post adoption breakdowns across the region during Year 4 will be available at the beginning of Year 5. Currently those children/young people who have returned to care are being identified, and then their ongoing care plan will be reviewed to see whether it fits the criteria for a disruption. (A child leaving their adoptive family with no plan for a rehab home).
- At the end of Year 4, we were aware of 2 adoption breakdowns (1 HCC child and 1 SCC child) which the Adoption Support Service had been involved with during the year.
- Adopt South's combined rate of post adoption breakdowns in Year 2 was 0.6%, which was 81% lower than the national average of 3.2%.

Adoption Information Exchange

Table 4.6

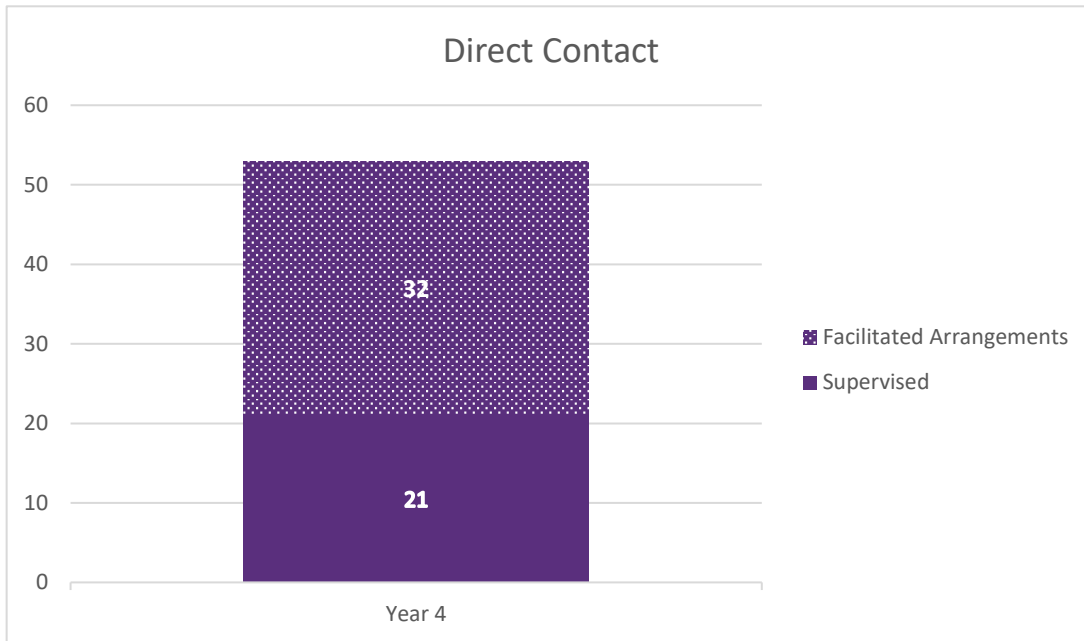


Commentary:

- The Adoption Information Exchange came into scope of Adopt South in Year 3.
- During Adopt South’s fourth year, a total of 2,857 Exchanges were processed. (HCC-1501; IOW- 130; PCC- 329; SCC- 897)

Table 4.7



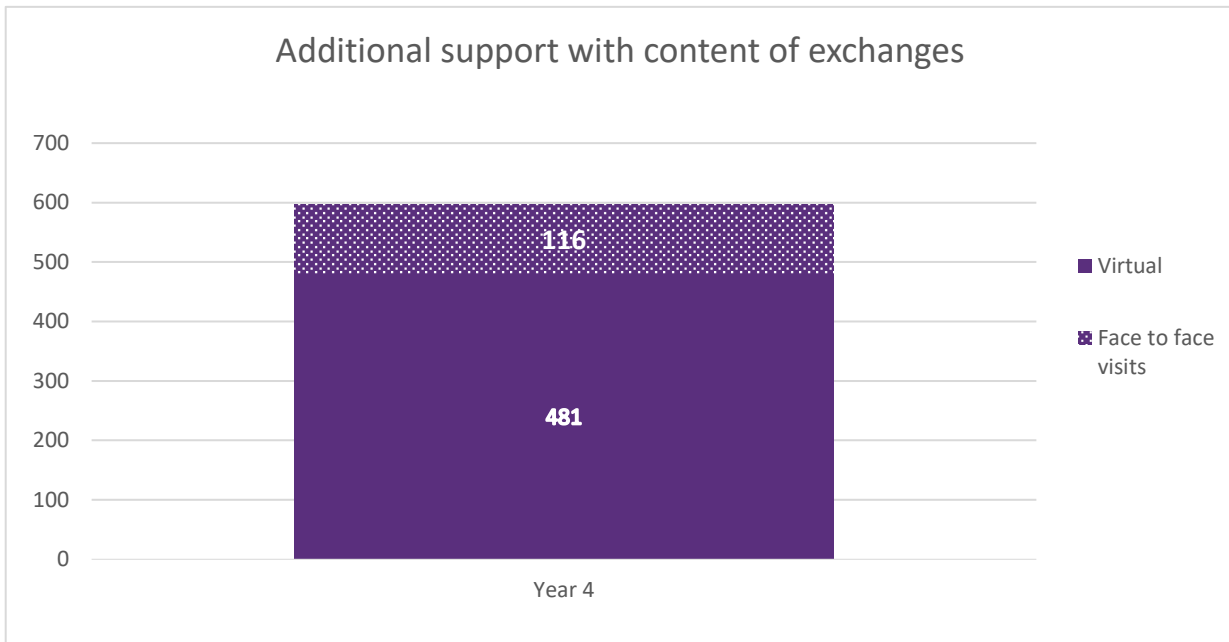


Commentary:

- During Adopt South’s fourth year, 21 direct contacts have been supervised by Adopt South staff.
- Adopt South staff undertook the planning, including mediation, risk assessments and offering advice and support, of a further 32 direct contacts, which were facilitated by the families directly.
- These contacts included 6 birth fathers, 7 birth mothers, 23 siblings, 6 maternal grandmothers, 4 paternal grandmothers, 1 paternal grandfather and one maternal great grandmother. (HCC – 5 birth mothers, 3 birth fathers, plus 2 contacts where both birth mother and father attended; IOW- 0; PCC- 0; SCC - 1 birth father, 0 - birth mother contacts).

Table 4.8





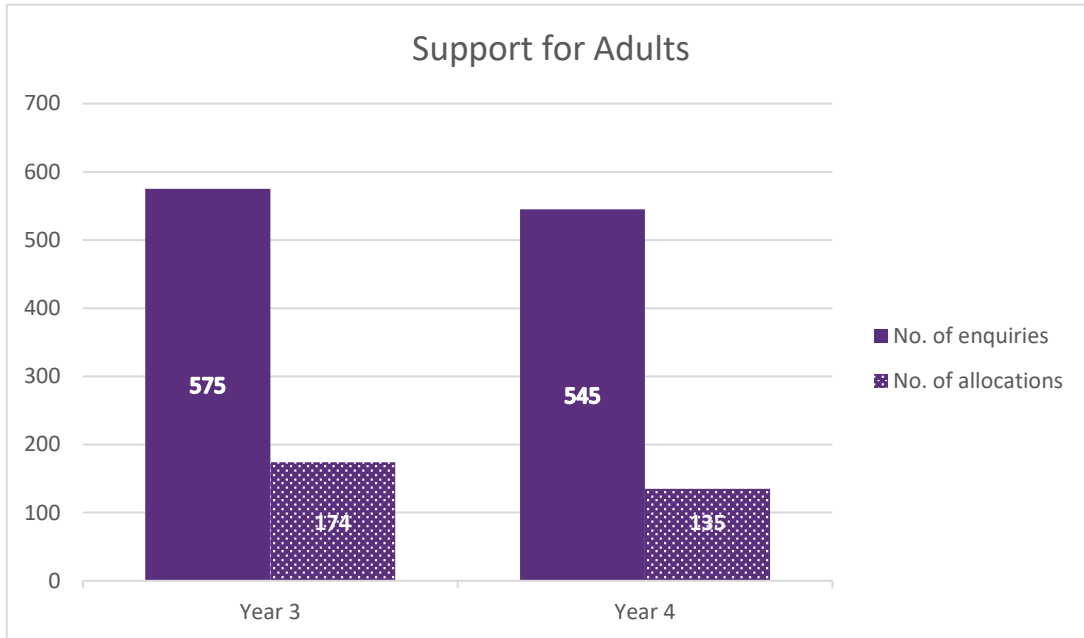
Commentary:

- Additional support is available to birth parents and adoptive parents to ensure the exchanges are child focussed.
- During Adopt South’s fourth year, additional support has been provided to 597 birth and adoptive families. This has consisted of 116 face-to-face visits and 481 virtual appointments.



Adoption Support for Adults

Table 4.9

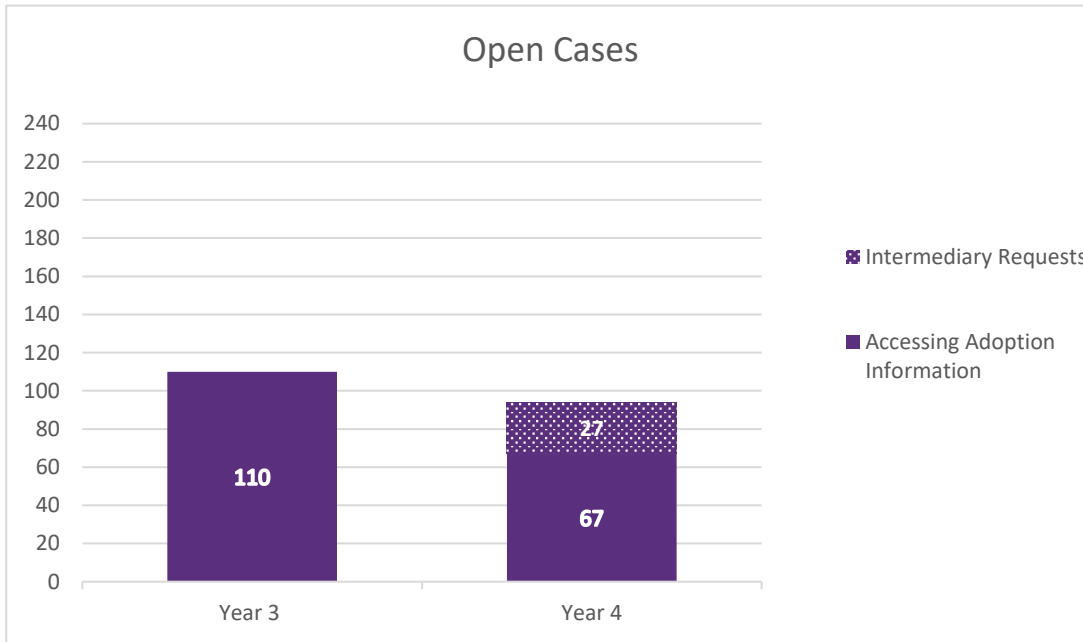


Commentary:

- Adoption Support for Adults came into scope of Adopt South at the beginning of Year 3.
- There are two distinct areas of work provided by the service, which includes supporting adult adoptees in accessing adoption records, and providing an intermediary service to adult adoptees and birth relatives.
- During Adopt South's fourth year, 545 enquiries have been received, resulting in 135 cases being allocated.
- This compares to Year 3, when 575 enquiries were received, resulting in 174 cases being allocated.

Table 4.10





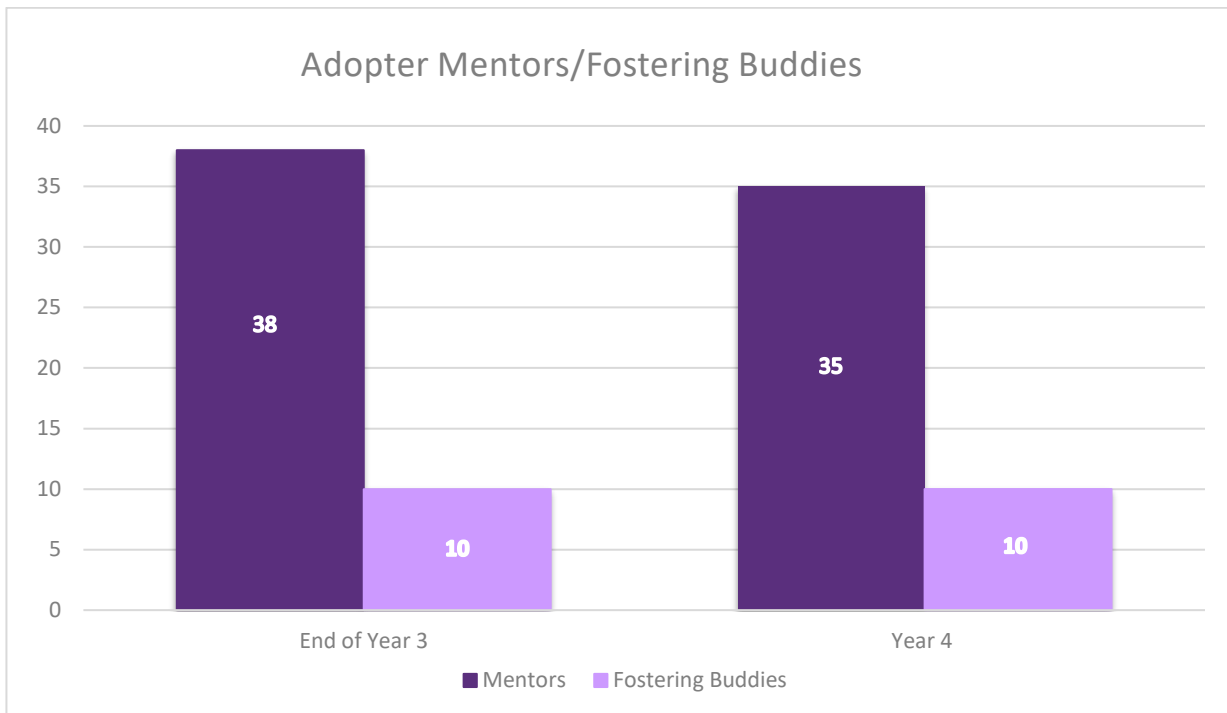
Commentary:

- At the end of Adopt South’s fourth year, there were 94 open cases (67 cases involved accessing adoption information and 27 cases regarded an intermediary service for adult adoptees and birth relatives).
- This compares to Year 3, when there were 110 open cases.

Peer Mentoring Scheme and Fostering Buddy Scheme

Table 5.1





Commentary:

- Adopt South’s Mentoring Scheme provides peer support to families both in the assessment/placement stage of adoption and post adoption order.
- There were 35 mentors overall in post at the end of Year 4.
- At the end of Year 4, there were 245 families receiving mentoring support, of which 214 were in the assessment/placement stage and 31 were post adoption order.
- Positive feedback has continued to be received about the scheme and of how much it is valued by both Prospective Adopters going through their adoption journey and by Adopters needing additional support post adoption.
- The Fostering Buddy Scheme offers one-off consultations with a registered Foster Carer to chat about topics such as child development, routines and the importance of introductions.
- At the end of Year 4, we had 10 experienced Fostering Buddies who offered chats to our Prospective Adopters.
- The Fostering Buddy Scheme was offered to 103 families during Adopt South’s fourth year, and all but one family took up this offer.

Spending and Potential Saving Comparisons

Children Placed Externally



Table 6.1



Commentary:

- During Adopt South’s fourth year, a sibling group of 2 children have been placed externally.
- 37 children were placed externally Pre-Adopt South (out of a total of 136), compared to 3 (out of a total of 118) in Year 1, 4 (out of a total of 108) in Year 2, and 4 (out of a total of 93) in Year 3.
- **Comparisons with the other 31 RAA’s show that last year, Adopt South placed more in-house than any other RAA and spent significantly less on external placements. Across the RAA’s, there was an average of 31% of children placed eternally, compared to just 3.7% for Adopt South. A number of RAA’s placed 50% of their children externally.**
- **Year 4 has seen just 1.7% placed externally (2 out of a total of 119).**



Interagency

Table 6.2



Commentary:

Income

- The current income target for sold adopters is £135,000, based on 5 placements of children from other RAA's with Adopt South adopters.
- The total income generated during Adopt South's fourth year is £124,000. 4 placements were sold, with 5 children placed. This comprised of:
 - £27,000 for 1 child placed from Adopt South West
 - £27,000 for 1 child placed from West Bay Adoption Services
 - £43,000 for 2 children placed from One Adoption West Yorkshire
 - £27,000 for 1 child placed with Adopt East Midlands

Purchases

- During Year 4, just 1 interagency placement has been purchased, for a sibling group of 2 at a cost of £54,630.



Income Generated through Training

Table 6.3



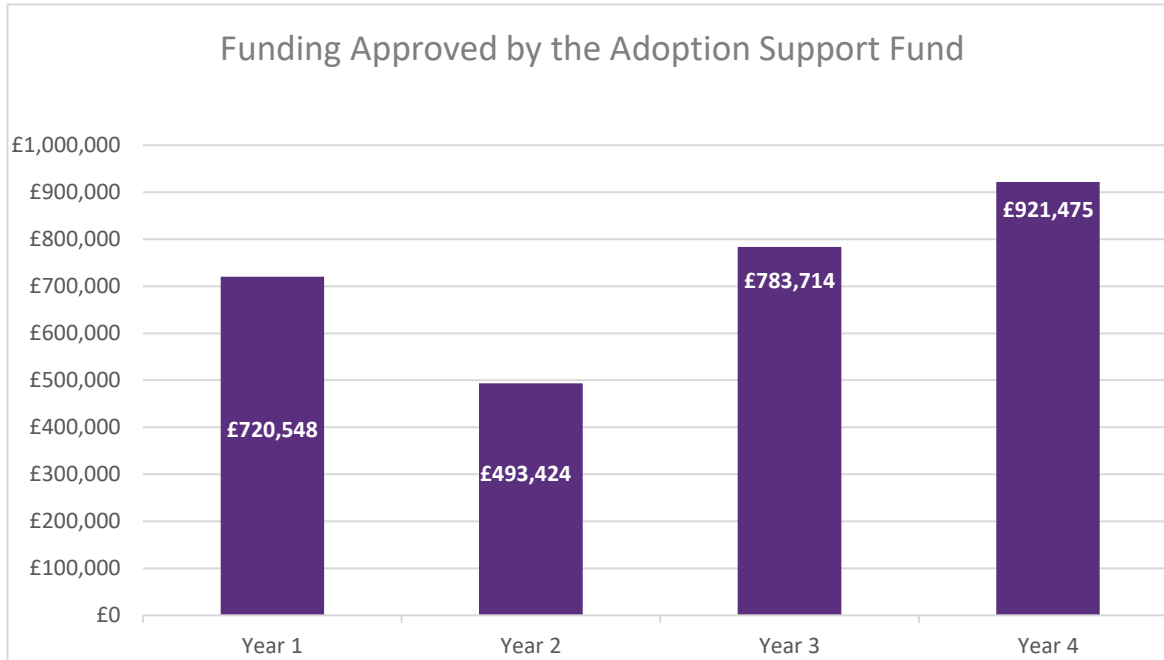
Commentary:

- The training income target was revised during the year to £50,000.
- The total income received in Adopt South's fourth year was £47,579 (just 4.8% below the income target set).
- This income was as a result of therapeutic parenting courses provided to adopters (Adopting Changes and Nurturing Attachments), which have been funded by successful applications to the Adoption Support Fund.



Adoption Support Fund

Table 6.4



Commentary:

- During Adopt South’s fourth year, there have been 371 applications approved by the Adoption Support Fund, totalling £921, 475.19.
- This compares to 313 applications in Year 3, totalling £783,714.82.
- In Year 2, £493,424.16 was approved in relation to regular applications for therapeutic interventions and a total of £572,555 when taking the COVID-19 ASF Scheme into consideration.
- During Adopt South’s first year, £720,548 was approved.
- ***Since the launch of Adopt South, a total of £2,919,161 has, therefore, been approved by the Adoption Support Fund.***





Agenda Item Introduction

Committee	POLICY AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES, EDUCATION AND SKILLS
Date	15 JUNE 2023
Topic	CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE REVIEW

BACKGROUND

The government's manifesto committed to review the children's social care system to make sure children and young people get the support they need.

The review was launched in March 2021 where it prioritised hearing the voices of children, young people and adults that have received the help or support of a social worker, or who have been looked after.

In May 2022 the independent review of children's social care was published, in February 2023 the government responded by publishing its strategy and consultation on children's social care. The committee is to receive an overview of the independent review and the government strategy focusing on the implications this may have for the islands Children's Services.

FOCUS FOR SCRUTINY

- What impact will the proposals and recommendations have on service delivery over the next few years?
- How can the committee support, challenge and be involved in the reshaping of children's social care services over the next few years?

APPROACH

A committee report to be provided.

APPENDICES ATTACHED

Family Help

Contact Point: Melanie White, Scrutiny Officer, ☎ 821000 ext 8876
e-mail melanie.white@iow.gov.uk

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Family Help

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HOW Children's Scrutiny Committee

Debbie Price

Area Director Children's Services (Children and Families)

Isle of Wight Council



Context

The publication of the **Independent Review of Children's Social Care (IRCSC)** report in May 2022 marks a significant and landmark point in time as it seeks to create generational change across children's social care.

The government's response entitled '**Stable Homes, Built on Love**' has **6** key pillars for areas of change. One of these areas being a catalyst for a '**revolution in family help**'.

Whilst awaiting responses to government consultation and a timetable for legislative changes local authorities are charged with commencing the work to develop and implement a new model of Family Help.

A phased and iterative approach is being adopted on the IOW to developing and implementing Family Help.

Family Help brings together targeted early help and children in need





Pillar 1

Family Help provides the right support at the right time so children can thrive with their families

- Consult on a wider range of professionals to hold cases alongside a knowledge and skills statement for Family Help workers
- Law commission review of disability legislation

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Pillar 2

A decisive multi-agency child protection system

- Consult on new National multi-agency child protection standards as part of 2023 update of Working Together
- Test and introduce new pathways to protect children from harms outside of the home
- Set clear roles and responsibilities for Safeguarding partners and increase the role of education

Pillar 3

Unlocking the potential of family networks

- £9m to provide training and support to Kinship carers
- Commitment to National Kinship Care Strategy by end of 2023

Pillar 4

Putting Love, stable relationships and care at the heart of being a child in care

- Over £27m for foster care recruitment and retention programme
- Introduce a financial oversight regime and develop a programme to support children's home sector
- Over £30m to expand Family Finding programmes and Lifelong Links
- Strengthen and extend corporate parenting responsibilities to a wider range of public bodies

Pillar 5

A valued, supported and highly skilled Social Worker for every child who needs one

- 5 year early career framework to support social workers at start of their career
- Support the recruitment of up to 500 additional child and family social work apprentices
- Consultation on national use of agency workers

Pillar 6

A system that continuously learns and improves and makes better use of evidence and data

- Introduce National Children's Social Care Framework, data dashboard and practice guides
- Long term strategy for transforming use of data by end 2023
- Improve evidence base for what works to support persistently 'requires improvement' authorities



What is Family Help?

The IRCSC defines Family Help as:

- 'support that aims to improve children's lives through supporting the family unit and strengthening family relationships, **to enable children to thrive and keep families together**, helping them to provide the safe, nurturing environments that children need'
- Being built in **partnership** with the families and communities it serves
- Is **high quality and evidence led**. It should be delivered by **skilled professionals from a range of disciplines** who have the time and capability to build trusting and supportive relationships
- Being available to any family facing significant challenges that could pose a threat to providing their child with a loving, stable, safe family life. This ranges from families who currently receive **targeted early help to those who are on a child in need or child protection plan**
- Seeking to understand and respond to **the whole range of challenges** that children and families face, bringing in and coordinating wider services and partners to support families and avoid them falling between services
- Support offered at the level a family needs in order for them to function well with the aim, where possible, of avoiding ongoing service involvement. It should build on a **wider offer of support and early intervention in communities** that is available to all families.



Our vision for Family Help



Outcomes

Improving outcome for children and families

Keep more children safely at home (with needs met)

Reducing demand for level 4 services

Increase recruitment and retention

Locally based FH teams aligned to local resources (hubs)



Children & Families will ...

Be able to access support easily in their local community

They will be pro active and empowered to seek support

Have an improved experience with less transition points

Build trusting and supportive relationships with a range of agencies

Have their needs met at the lowest level to reduce escalation



We will ...

Reduce transition points

Improve community links

Foster Multi Agency working

Be responsive to the dynamic nature of families

We will use local resources to facilitate positive outcomes



We need to be good at ...

Aligning workers skills to meet the needs of the family eg: IW workers

Using skills set of differently qualified staff

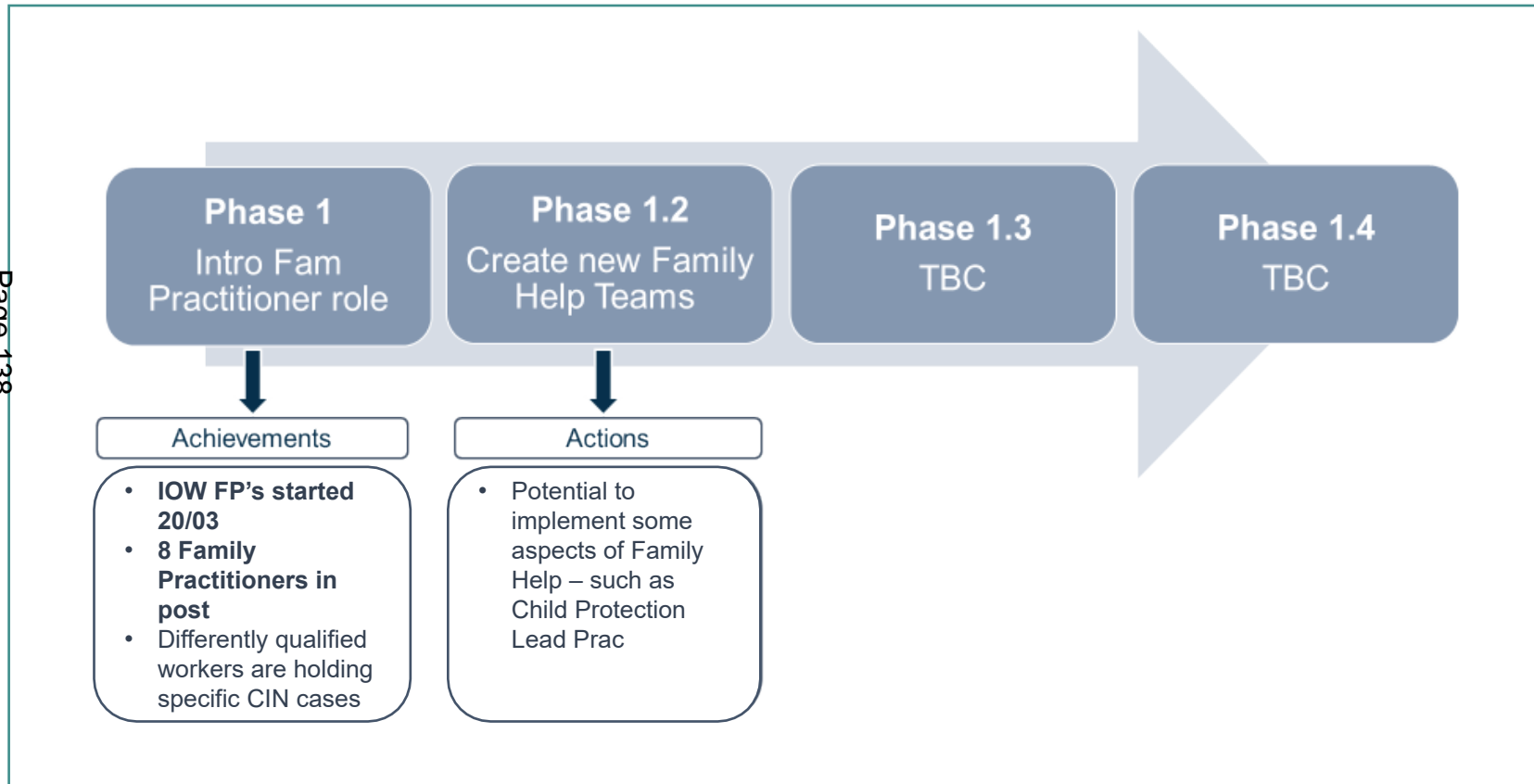
Linking and building relationships with local community resources

Establishing a flexible workforce

Adopting and implementing a whole family approach



Family Help - Context and approach





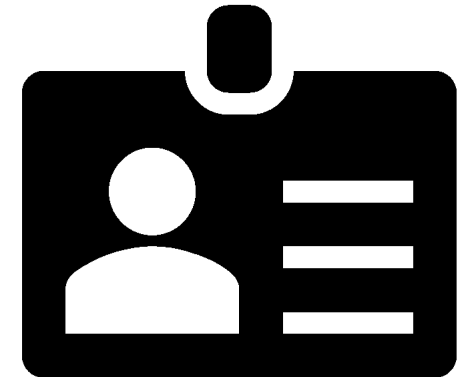
Phase 1: Family Practitioner role

This role has been developed within the context of statutory and legal requirements but also a desire, as an Outstanding authority, to lead in new and innovative ways of working.

Overview of role:

These new posts will be deployed within our Childrens Assessment and Safeguarding Teams (CAST), two per team.

- Page 139 A new **role profile** has been developed for the Family Practitioner – based on those of Child Practitioners and RAFT family workers.
- These staff will **case hold specific families** who have met the threshold for receiving statutory services, thus social workers will no longer be the only role who can case hold statutory level families
- These practitioners will **ONLY** case hold specific Children in Need case types where there is a lower level of risk
- Social Workers will have statutory case holding responsibility across a mix of case types but will exclusively case hold children on child protection plans and looked after children
- For families allocated to a Family Practitioner for a Child & Family assessment a Social Worker will **always** jointly visit and be part of the assessment. Depending on the outcome the Team Manager will review allocation decision
- For some families it will be appropriate for a Social worker and Family Practitioner to co-work a family

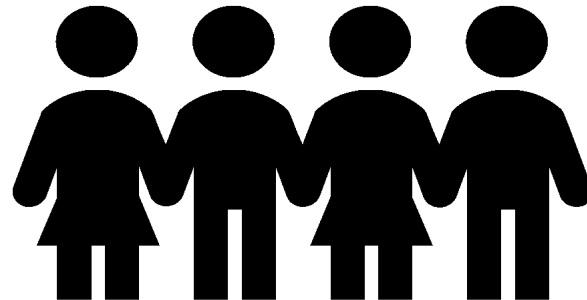




Early Help on the IOW

- There is a small central coordinating team within the IOW CSD who QA all early help assessments and plans
- Part of the wider early help offer is commissioned to Barnardos (0-19 family Centre offer)
- The majority of families are held by partner agencies (primarily schools and health colleagues)

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Child Protection Lead Practitioner

The CPLP is a newly created role proposed as part of the IRCSC

The expectations set out are that they will:

- Be an experienced/Advanced Social Worker
- Co-work and work alongside Family Help Teams and have responsibility for making key decisions
- Chair Child Protection conferences
- Hold their own caseload within Family Help

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Several options have been explored in relation to this new role, option 5 has been agreed as the option to be implemented.





Opportunities for IOW

- The current commissioning arrangements for early help on the IOW are a significant factor which will impact and influence the development of a new Family Help model

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However, there are some potential **opportunities** that do exist for some elements of Family Help to be implemented more quickly, such as:

- The Child Protection Lead Practitioner role
- Localising CAST to align with Family Hub boundaries



Any questions?

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Agenda Item Introduction

Committee	POLICY AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES, EDUCATION AND SKILLS
Date	15 JUNE 2023
Topic	SACRE ANNUAL REPORT 2021-22

BACKGROUND

The law states that religious education (RE) must be taught in all schools. However, RE is not part of the National Curriculum, it is a local responsibility. Every Local Education Authority (LEA) is required by law to have a Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) which supports the effective provision of religious education and collective worship in schools.

The committee receive an annual report that provides an overview of the work conducted by SACRE.

FOCUS FOR SCRUTINY

- What successes have happened within the last year?
- What challenges have been faced in the last year and what are the lessons learned?
- What improvements have been identified and what are the timelines for improvements or actions?
- How can the committee support SACRE moving forward?

APPROACH

A committee report to be provided.

APPENDICES ATTACHED

SACRE Annual Report 2021-22

Contact Point: Melanie White, Scrutiny Officer, ☎ 821000 ext 8876
e-mail melanie.white@iow.gov.uk

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ISLE OF WIGHT LOCAL AUTHORITY

The Standing Advisory Council
for Religious Education
Annual Report

SCHOOL YEAR 2021-2022

What is a SACRE?

A SACRE must:

- Advise the local authority (LA) on matters related to agreed syllabus religion education (RE) and Collective worship (CW)
- Publish an Annual Report on its work and on actions taken by its representative groups
- Email a copy of the Annual report to the Secretary of State – these reports will be analysed by the DfE and NASACRE
- Meet in public, unless confidential information is to be disclosed
- Consider appeal from schools wishing to modify the legal requirement for the majority of acts of collective worship to be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character;
- Monitor the provision and quality of agreed syllabus RE and of CW in order to provide targeted advice and support on teaching agreed syllabus RE
- Advise the LA on the provision of training of teachers
- Consider complaints about RE and CW referred to them by their LA
- Consider whether changes need to be made to the agreed syllabus, in partnership with the LA
- Offer advice to the LA in respect of the agreed syllabus and its implementation
- Require the LA to review its Agreed Syllabus
- Co-opt individuals who are not members of any of the groups, for example to provide educational expertise, the views of young people and children, or religious and non-religious views that reflect a diverse multi-cultural society

(Taken from [PowerPoint Presentation \(nasacre.org.uk\)](https://www.nasacre.org.uk)).

Words from the Chair of SACRE

It has been my great privilege to represent secondary schools on the Isle of Wight SACRE for a number of years now and, having been the Chair of the Isle of Wight SACRE for four years, I am proud to present our Annual Report. The Isle of Wight SACRE is a dynamic group who have a passion for and dedication to Religious Education. SACRE seeks to ensure all our schools offer the highest provision to enable our children and young people to explore their own lives and develop their own thinking based on engaging intellectually with a range of perspectives.

This year we have continued the important work of representing the Island, whether this be in person or in virtual meetings, ensuring that the pandemic doesn't stop us from developing and supporting schools.

We have met regularly in 2021-2022, including attending the South Central Hub of SACREs and our termly monitoring group, which has been meeting regularly to evaluate the provision for Religious Education in our schools. We have also been working alongside our Religious Education inspectors in Hampshire to ensure our young people have access to a challenging curriculum that suits their needs and helps them develop their own understanding of what it means to be religious.

We are pleased to report that in the last year we were able to provide networks for secondary school Religious Education teachers and primary school teachers remotely, which allowed the sharing of good practice and professional development for island teachers and kept them up to date with Religious Education matters.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all members of the Isle of Wight SACRE for their continued commitment to our children and young people. It really is a pleasure to get to meet and work alongside so many passionate people who give up their valuable time to support the continued development of the subject in order to enable our children and young people to experience religious education in a way which has meaning for them.

I want to extend particular thanks to Sue Cox who has represented Free Churches on the Isle of Wight on the SACRE for many years and has now retired and to Nicky Mobley for her time and commitment to the SACRE too. The SACRE was lucky to have such committed and dedicated members.

I have great pleasure in commending this report to you.

Beth Feltham Chair of SACRE

Overview

Management of SACRE

SACRE has been supported by a LA clerk since the summer of 2021. In addition, SACRE is supported by a Professional Adviser for its activities and monitoring of the syllabus. Standards and quality of provision for Religious Education in Isle of Wight Schools are regularly reviewed by the SACRE monitoring subgroup which meets each term with the Professional Adviser. During 2021/2022, findings have been regularly submitted to the full SACRE at the termly meetings.

Attendance at SACRE by Committee 2021-2022

Group A:

Faiths represented:

Church of England, Methodist, Free Church, Catholic, Jewish, Buddhist, Hindu, Humanist, Bahai, Quaker, Muslim.

Group B: Church of England

Group C: Teachers Liaison Panel

Group D: County Councillors

Attendance

5 October 2021

A: 3
B: 1
C: 1
D: 3

23 March 2022

A: 5
B: 1
C: 2
D: 2

27 June 2022

A: 2
B: 1
C: 1
D: 2

During this year the Sacre has been struggling to find representatives for some vacancies. In particular, two of the four Church of England representatives have moved onto other areas of work and this has left two vacancies which have been filled at the end of the summer of 2022. There have also been resignations from some group A representatives during the period of this report and the primary school Headteacher representative post has also become vacant. This has been filled at the end of the summer of 2022. A number of representatives have been unable to attend the face to face SACRE meetings, which has again affected attendance. In addition, SACRE is still seeking a Hindu representative due to the resignation of the existing Hindu representative and is seeking a Sikh representative. Increasing the membership of the SACRE will be a priority for 2022-23.

Training for SACRE members:

Training is offered regularly to SACRE members by SACRE officers when there are enough new members to require this. The launch of Living Difference IV took place during the period covered by this report. SACRE members were encouraged to attend the various launch events in order to gain a thorough appreciation of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Training is also offered to all members to refresh their knowledge of SACRE's role and responsibilities. SACRE members are regularly updated through NASACRE information, advice and training and the training programme for SACRE members is shared with members each term. Members are also encouraged to attend the NASACRE annual conference and this year a member of the SACRE attended and reported back to the full SACRE.

SACRE Advice to Statutory Bodies

1. Adoption and Implementation of the Locally Agreed Syllabus, Living Difference IV

Living Difference IV was adopted as the Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education on the Isle of Wight in October 2021.

Much work has continued through the period of this Annual Report to ensure there continues to be provision for training head teachers, senior leaders and Religious Education leaders as well as ongoing provision for development for teachers in Religious Education in all phases of education. *Living Difference IV* has been adopted in this academic year and virtual conferences for its launch have been offered on three occasions so that as many Head teachers, leaders, teachers and members of the SACRE could attend this as possible. The conference launches were designed to ensure teachers were introduced to the essential elements of the syllabus and could make the changes to their curriculum by September 2022.

2. Advice to the Local Authority

SACRE offers advice to the Local Authority regarding Religious Education. During this period, the Agreed Syllabus Conference adopted the revised Locally Agreed Syllabus, Living Difference IV. SACRE advised the Local Authority that this syllabus would now be the one used in all Isle of Wight Local Authority schools.

3. Advice Given to Schools

During this period there have been many professional development opportunities available to provide high quality advice to support schools in their consistent implementation of the syllabus.

- The professional adviser and the HIAS County Inspector/Adviser for Secondary Religious Education have continued to run secondary and primary networks virtually through this period. The network meetings have provided advice and support for the implementation of Living Difference IV and on managing and leading RE, assessment in RE and subject specific CPD.
- Joint primary, secondary and special school conferences took place during this period in the form of three large launch conferences for the new Locally Agreed Syllabus, Living Difference IV. Many Isle of Wight schools attended these.
- SACRE members have been able to resume face to face visits to primary schools during this period. This has been done with the professional adviser and reports are made to the monitoring group.
- The professional adviser has written a Religious Education newsletter to primary schools to help support them with implementing the new Locally Agreed Syllabus and has offered time to schools who need further help with the syllabus through virtual one to one short meetings.

4. Advice given to government and other statutory bodies

The professional adviser has held the position of co-chair of the Association of RE Inspectors, Advisers and Consultants (AREIAC) during the period of this report. This ensures that SACRE matters and Religious Education locally are part of national discussions about the subject.

SACRE monitoring of standards and Quality of Provision of Religious Education

SACRE professional adviser and HIAS inspector/advisers enable SACRE to monitor the effectiveness of the Agreed Syllabus in various ways. For example, through study of GCSE results, consideration of teacher comments at the SACRE meeting, school monitoring visits and training network comments.

a) Public Examinations in 2021

GCSE Full Course Religious Studies examinations did not take place in the summer of 2021. Grades were awarded on the basis of teacher assessments and no subject level data was released to Local Authorities from individual schools during the period covered by this report.

b) Progress and attainment in Religious Education not covered by public examinations

The Locally Agreed Syllabus emphasises the importance of high-quality Religious Education provision for all young people throughout their school life, including non examination, core Religious Education for KS4. The end of year expectations for year 10

and 11 in Living Difference IV should be used to inform the expectations for the core Religious Education courses at KS4.

SACRE is aware that there remain schools where young people are not able to access their entitlement for Religious Education either in part or at all at KS4. This will remain a focus in the next academic year.

During this period, the launch of Living Difference IV has ensured that many headteachers are aware of their responsibilities and can seek advice about improving provision.

A regular network for secondary Religious Education heads of department has run during this period. These networks bring together secondary teachers across the Island to plan together and share good practice. This network meeting, run by the Hampshire County Inspector/Adviser for Religious Education, has been an opportunity also to discover where there are areas for focus in the subject in Isle of Wight secondary schools. These all help the SACRE to monitor the implementation and impact of the Agreed Syllabus, Living Difference IV.

As has been the case for several years, the regular Primary Religious Education network meetings have continued to run and have increased from twice a year to three times a year and have also been well attended. The training networks and the regular email contact with schools have helped SACRE and the local authority working together to know that schools have access to training and advice and are able to use Living Difference IV well. Through the provision of training and advice, there is progression through KS1, KS2 and onto KS3. Teachers in both primary and secondary schools are becoming more confident with planning using Living Difference IV. More examples of good practice are emerging, especially in primary schools. These have been placed on the RE Moodle for other teachers to access freely, for example the exemplar Long Term Plan from Brighstone Primary School on the Island.

The regular Primary Schools' network meetings support the formal training offer and have been well attended. Teachers report that they find the inputs, and the opportunity to share good practice, invaluable.

c) The Quality of Religious Education provision in Isle of Wight Schools

Religious Education network meetings and attendance at Inspector/Adviser courses indicates that most schools are developing their curriculum to ensure compliance with the Locally Agreed Syllabus, Living Difference IV. Time allocation for Religious Education in the primary phase is usually good. The syllabus recommends that teachers teach the subject and that it is blocked for effective teaching. This is checked on visits and on training or subject meetings with schools. In the secondary phase time allocation for all pupils in KS3 is generally good and is discussed at network meetings with advice provided. SACRE has continued to monitor the teaching of core Religious Education and public examination Religious Education at KS4 through network meetings and has offered advice and support on this to schools. It will continue to be a focus going forward. More monitoring visits and subject meetings to monitor this are planned this next academic year.

d) Withdrawal from Religious Education

24 Isle of Wight schools completed a survey from a range of primary, secondary and special schools. The number of children withdrawn from all or parts of Religious Education and

Collective Worship were very, very low with nearly all children in attendance. The reasons were mainly due to parental personal belief.

e) Complaints about Religious Education

No complaints have been received about Religious Education during the period of this report.

f) SACRE support to schools

The Hampshire RE Moodle is offered to schools through Hampshire Inspection and Advisory Service and is an online platform where materials written by SACRE advisers and the Hampshire steering groups can be made available to teachers. This is in addition to the materials available to teachers on the RE Curriculum website.

The Hampshire County RE Curriculum centre continues to support the work of teachers across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. The RE Curriculum centre has written and sold packs to help teachers deliver high quality Religious Education on a wide variety of concepts. Considerable time has had to be given to making adjustments to all packs following the adoption of Living Difference IV as the Locally Agreed Syllabus by the RE centre manager, Lydia Revett. She continues to be available to offer guidance and to direct teachers to the latest materials to ensure the thorough implementation of Living Difference IV.

In the period of this report, SACRE advisers have spent a great deal of time, together with the RE centre manager, updating materials on the Hampshire RE Moodle and the HIAS RE website.

Collective Worship

Monitoring Collective Worship is a focus area for the SACRE and during the period of this report it was decided to look at Collective Worship as well as RE on school visits. During this period, the SACRE also asked for training on Collective Worship to be available to schools in 2022-23 and this has been organised now for all schools.

There has been advice and support from the Professional Adviser for schools on Collective Worship and there are advice materials available from the Hampshire RE centre which schools can purchase for further advice. An action point to support and monitor Collective Worship across schools has been included in the SACRE's 3 year Action plan.

There have been no complaints received regarding Collective Worship this academic year.

Determinations

There have been no applications for Determinations in Collective Worship during this past year.

Links with other bodies

The Island SACRE is a member of NASACRE and has access to the support offered by NASACRE in its annual programme of training.

The SACRE has close links with Portsmouth and Winchester Church of England Diocese and the local faith groups on the Island. For example, several members attended the Visit my Mosque initiative on the Island held in 2022.

The Island SACRE always attends the termly meeting of the South Central SACRE hub which has members from many of the South Coast's SACREs who meet together and share best practice.

Support for the SACRE

SACRE continues to be well supported by the RE inspectors from Hampshire. Their wide-ranging experience, combined with their involvement in national initiatives, ensures that the Isle of Wight SACRE, and the Local Authority, are well briefed and kept up-to-speed with initiatives.

SACRE's Development Plan is reviewed at each meeting and the latest version is attached here (Annexe 2). This enables SACRE to monitor if, and how, it's achieving its stated aims at supporting schools in RE. SACRE continues to be well supported by the LA through an allocated budget.

Summary

As last year, through continued links with Hampshire, SACRE has benefited from the support of the two Hampshire RE inspector/Advisers; one of whom is designated as the Professional Adviser to SACRE. Their expertise and advice continue to be invaluable in supporting SACRE fulfil its statutory duties.

The Clerk continues to act as a link between SACRE and schools and representatives of different faiths. SACRE members are engaged with visiting schools as well as supporting training for teachers. Church of England Diocesan networks also run on the Isle of Wight for subject leaders in Church Schools. Some of these teachers also attend the LA network meetings. All schools are teaching the Locally Agreed Syllabus Living Difference III.

The Isle of Wight SACRE continues to have a strong sense of team spirit, commitment and cooperation. Meetings are held in an open, frank, manner. The four groups of SACRE ensure SACRE is able to meet its statutory responsibilities

Annexe 1
SACRE Membership
SACRE Membership 2021-2022

Committee A

Members representing the “Free Churches”

Rev. Mike Hackleton (Methodist)

Two members representing the Roman Catholic Church

Sister Stella Kelly

Mrs Alison Burt

Members representing non-Christian faiths

Dr. Lionel Alexander (Jewish faith)

Mrs Anne Sechiari (Buddhist)

Sylvia Clare (Buddhist)

Mr Simon Bligh (Humanist)

Mrs Norma Corney (Baha'i)

Mr Ebrahim Jeewa/ Mr. Abdul Basith (Muslim)

Mr Noel Wilde (Quaker)

(Methodist)

Committee B (4 members in total)

Representing the Church of England

Mr Harry Kirby

Mrs Beryl Miller

Committee C (4 members in total)

Representing the teachers of the Isle of Wight. Nominated by appropriate groups.

Secondary	Miss Beth Feltham	The Bay CE School
Primary	Mrs Kirstie Thomas	Cowes Primary School
	Mrs Nicky Mobley	St Blasius Shanklin CE Primary Academy
	Mrs Claire Carter	St George's school

Committee D (4 members in total)

Representing the Local Authority. Two elected Members. Two nominated by the Director of Education

Cllr Debbie Andre

Cllr Claire Critchison

Mr. Stuart Brenchley

Mr Alex Augustus

Christ the King College

Principal St Francis Academy

In attendance

Sarah Philipsborn

Clerk

Justine Ball RE Inspector (Primary)

Adviser

Isle of Wight SACRE 3 year Action Plan for SACRE 2021,2022,2023: to be reviewed at each monitoring group meeting and progress reported to each SACRE meeting through Monitoring Group Report. SACRE review Action Plan annually as part of annual report

No.	Actions	Who	Target completion date	Intended outcomes	Status and RAG rating
1.	Maintaining SACRE Effectiveness and Leadership				
1.1	SACRE to meet once each term and be quorate	SACRE Professional Adviser and SACRE Clerk	Once each term	For Isle of Wight SACRE to be effective	Green
1.2	Representative appointments to all four groups of SACRE to be in place	SACRE Professional Adviser and SACRE Clerk	When necessary	For Isle of Wight SACRE to be effective	Amber
1.3	Introductory training offered to new SACRE members	SACRE Professional Adviser	When necessary	For Isle of Wight SACRE to be effective	Amber
1.4	Regular training offered to all SACRE members regarding new national initiatives relevant to RE	SACRE Professional Adviser	When necessary	For Isle of Wight SACRE to be effective	Green
1.5	SACRE Members appointed to attend South Central SACRE RE Hub once each term and NASACRE AGM and other events as deemed fitting by SACRE	SACRE Professional Adviser SACRE Chair and Vice Chair and SACRE Clerk	Various	For Isle of Wight SACRE to be effective and take active part in NASACRE and SACRE events in the region	Green
1.6	SACRE engage in monitoring Collective Worship across the county and identify examples of best practice in secondary, primary and special schools	Monitoring Group with SACRE Professional Adviser & SACRE Chair and Vice Chair	Monitoring Group report to SACRE meetings	For Isle of Wight SACRE to be effective	Amber
1.7	SACRE monitor withdrawal from RE and Collective Worship and develop guidance for IoW schools	Monitoring Group with SACRE Professional Adviser & SACRE Chair and Vice Chair	Monitoring Group report to SACRE meetings	For Isle of Wight SACRE to be effective	Green
1.8	Introducing new SACRE clerk to the SACRE and induction training developed for the role.	Professional Adviser and Chair and Vice Chair.	Reviewed once each term	For Clerk to feel supported by SACRE and to identify and meet any gaps in provision.	Amber
1.9	SACRE Self Evaluation	SACRE	Reviewed once each year	For Isle of Wight SACRE to be effective	Amber

	Actions	Who	Target completion date	Intended outcomes	Status and RAG rating
2.	Implementation and monitoring the effectiveness of the Agreed Syllabus : Living Difference III				
2.1	Monitoring Group to meet once each term and report to each following SACRE meeting	SACRE Clerk and SACRE Professional Adviser with SACRE Monitoring Group	Once each term	For Isle of Wight SACRE to be effective	Green
2.2	Monitoring visits to take place in schools	SACRE Clerk and SACRE Professional Adviser with SACRE Monitoring Group	Once each term	This and other data (e.g. annual ascertain provision of RE in Isle of Wight Schools & overall findings presented to SACRE	Green
2.3	Monitoring and reporting of GCSE results	SACRE Monitoring Group and SACRE Professional Adviser	Once each year	Verified results to have been considered by Monitoring group once each year and findings presented to SACRE	Green
2.4	Monitoring in-service Professional Educational opportunities attended by teachers: (i) Feedback from teachers on need (ii) Uptake of IoW RE Networks and other Hampshire courses (primary and secondary and special)	SACRE Monitoring Group and SACRE Professional Adviser	Once each term	Analysis of data including feedback from teachers on courses undertaken by inspector/Advisers	Green
2.5	Monitoring group reporting on Ofsted Visits to Isle of Wight Schools mentioning or inferring messages about religious education	SACRE Monitoring Group and SACRE Professional Adviser	Once each term	Analysis of information from Ofsted inspections of Isle of Wight Schools	Green
2.6	Monitoring group reporting on other HIAS visits made to schools revealing information about RE	SACRE Monitoring Group and SACRE Professional Adviser	Once each term	Analysis of information from HIAS school visits to Isle of Wight Schools	Green
2.7	Monitoring withdrawal from RE and Collective Worship through annual questionnaire – ensuring that this is received in schools by the right person to complete	SACRE Clerk and SACRE Professional Adviser with SACRE Monitoring Group	Once each year	Analysis of questionnaire reported to SACRE	Green

No.	Actions	Who	Target completion date	Intended outcomes	Status and RAG rating
3.	Meeting training needs of Isle of Wight teachers and school leaders				
3.1	Review professional education offer through a questionnaire to teachers	Isle of Wight Inspector/Advisers	Spring term 2022	Identify and meet any gaps in current professional education provision	Red
3.2	Be aware of professional education offer across partner and neighbouring SACREs	Isle of Wight Inspector/Advisers	ongoing	Identify and meet any gaps in current professional education provision	Green
3.3	Support on-going development of an annual pattern of professional education for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) New RE leaders in primary schools (ii) Experienced RE leaders in primary schools (iii) NQT, HoD and other specialist courses (iv) Courses for non-specialist secondary teachers of RE (v) special education teachers (vi) Subject booster opportunities available (vii) Governor training 	Isle of Wight Inspector/Advisers	ongoing	ensure pattern of professional education is relevant and well timed	Green
3.4	Ensure a rolling programme of briefing for head teachers and separately for governors regarding Living Difference III across the Isle of Wight	Isle of Wight Inspector/Advisers	ongoing	For Isle of Wight teachers at all stages of their careers to have access to high quality appropriate professional education opportunities	Working through HIAS School Improvement Partner for the IoW

No.	Actions	Who	Target date	Intended outcomes	Status and RAG rating
4.	Resourcing Living Difference III				
4.1	Ensure teachers in primary, secondary and special schools have access to resources to support the teaching of Living Difference III	Isle of Wight RE Inspectors/Advisers, Isle of Wight Curriculum RE Centre manager and SACRE members and teachers	Progress on these elements reviewed annually by Monitoring group	Relevant publications available for teachers at all key stages to enhance the teaching of RE with Living Difference III	Green
4.4	Review KS4 provision in secondary schools especially non examination courses in light of developments with GCSE	Isle of Wight County RE Inspector/Adviser		Ensure all young people have access to Good Quality RE at KS 4 and able to receive their entitlement for RE.	Amber
5.	SACRE Youth Voice				
	Development of SACRE Youth Voice	Inspector/Advisers, SACRE Chair and members	Ongoing through the period of this development plan		Red – in progress
5.1	Summer SACRE Youth Voice conference to take place	Inspector/Advisers, SACRE Chair and members			

Policy and Scrutiny Committee for Children's Services, Education and Skills Workplan 2022-25

The committee assists Cabinet in the development and implementation of key plans, policies and activities set out in the Corporate Plan relating to the delivery of relevant services, including:

Children's Services
(including safeguarding)

Corporate Parenting

Special Educational Needs
and/or Disabilities

Early Help

Education

Apprenticeships

Adult Learning

Date	Agenda Items	Description & Background	Lead Officer/Cabinet Member
15 June 2023	Performance & Budget	To consider current performance trends and budget 2023/24	Director of Children's Services Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Skills
	Fostering Annual Report 2022-23	To consider the annual report in respect to fostering on the Isle of Wight.	Director of Children's Services Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Skills
	Adoption Annual Report 2022-23	To consider the annual report in respect to adoption on the Isle of Wight.	Director of Children's Services Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Skills
	Children's Social Care Review	To consider the implications of the Independent Review of Children's Social Care.	Director of Children's Services Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Skills
	SACRE Annual Report 2021-22	To consider the work of the Standing Advisory Committee for Religious Education	Director of Children's Services Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Skills
24 July 2023 - INFORMAL	Children with Disabilities	To consider the range of provision on the island and understand the challenges that are faced such as recruitment and retention	Director of Children's Services Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Skills

Agenda Item 11

Agenda Item 11

7 September 2023	Child Poverty Strategy	To consider the report on school place planning following it going to Cabinet in June 2023	Director of Children's Services Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Skills
	Isle of Wight Start for Life and Family Hub Programme	To consider a report on the development of the Isle of Wight Family Hub offer and the delivery plan	Director of Children's Services Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Skills
	School Transport	To consider the trends in school transport activity and costs as well as the plans and initiatives underway to try and manage these costs.	Director of Children's Services Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Skills
	Post Decision Scrutiny - School Place Planning	To consider the report on school place planning following it going to Cabinet in June 2023	Director of Children's Services Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Skills
	Annual Complaints Report – Children's Social Work	To consider the annual report in accordance with best practice advice from the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman to ensure that lessons learnt are being implemented	Director of Children's Services Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Skills
30 October 2023 - INFORMAL	TBC		
7 December 2023	Performance & Budget	Current performance trends and budget 2023/24	Director of Children's Services Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Skills
	IW Safeguarding Children's Board Annual Report	To consider the annual report	Chairman of the Board
	Children's Health & Wellbeing	To discuss key issues in relation to the health and wellbeing of children	Director of Public Health Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health
	Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report	To receive a report on the achievements of the year, the challenges of the year, the action plan for the next year to enable scrutiny to work alongside and monitor the actions of the CPB to improve the governance of Children's Services as a whole.	Director of Children's Services Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Skills
	SACRE Annual Report 2022-23	To consider the work of the Standing Advisory Committee for Religious Education	Director of Children's Services Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Skills

5 February 2024 - INFORMAL	TBC		
7 March 2024	School Attainment	To consider the annual report on attainment	Director of Children's Services Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Skills
	Safety Valve - Update on Progress	To be advised on the progress of implementation of the Safety Valve programme	Director of Children's Services Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Skills
	Early Years Childcare Sufficiency Report	The committee to receive an overview of Early Years childcare sufficiency on the Isle of Wight.	Director of Children's Services Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Skills
	School Attendance & Exclusions	The committee to consider the latest position on attendance and exclusions.	Director of Children's Services Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Skills
June 2024	Performance & Budget	Current performance trends and budget 2024/25	Director of Children's Services Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Skills
	Fostering & Adoption Annual Reports	To consider the annual reports	Director of Children's Services Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Skills
	Social Worker Recruitment & Retention	To consider steps being taken to assist in the recruitment and retention of social workers within Children's Services	Director of Children's Services Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Skills
September 2024	Annual Complaints Report – Children's Social Work	To consider the annual report in accordance with best practice advice from the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman to ensure that lessons learnt are being implemented	Director of Children's Services Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Skills

December 2024	Performance & Budget	Current performance trends and budget 2023/24	Director of Children's Services Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Skills
	IW Safeguarding Children's Board Annual Report	To consider the annual report	Chairman of the Board
	SACRE Annual Report	To consider the work of the Standing Advisory Committee for Religious Education	Director of Children's Services Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Skills
	Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report	To receive a report on the achievements of the year, the challenges of the year, the action plan for the next year to enable scrutiny to work alongside and monitor the actions of the CPB to improve the governance of Children's Services as a whole.	Director of Children's Services Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Skills
March 2025	School Attainment	To consider the annual report on attainment	Director of Children's Services Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Skills
	Safety Valve - Update on Progress	To be advised on the progress of implementation of the Safety Valve programme	Director of Children's Services Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Skills