

**REFERRAL TRENDS/ORIGIN OF REFERRALS TO CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE**

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**Purpose of Report**

1. To inform Scrutiny Committee of referral trends to Children's Social Care; their origins and the processes in place to respond.

**Information and Analysis**

2. The number of Child Protection Referrals per 10,000 population is low – 444 (this is considerably better than the National picture)
3. The total number of referrals at 782 (April 2007 – January 2008) represents a relatively consistent picture compared to previous years.
4. The greatest number of referrals are from the police - 215 (as would be expected), with education colleagues referring 117 and health 89.
5. The response to referrals is provided by the Child Care Duty Team (a Team Manager, 7 social workers and 3 child support officers). A specialist group of 4 workers respond to referrals concerning domestic abuse.
6. The rate of referrals that led to initial assessment has improved from an already high rate to 99.6% (again, better than the National performance rate of 56%). This suggests a good inter-agency understanding of thresholds for social care involvement.

**Legal Implications**

7. This report has been considered by the Borough Solicitor for legal implications in accordance with the Council's approved procedures. The Local Authority has a duty to assess Children in Need (S17 Children Act 1989) and those at risk of significant harm (S47 Children Act 1989). There are no issues which the Borough Solicitor considers need to be brought to the specific attention of Members, other than those highlighted in the report.

**Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998**

8. The contents of this report have been considered in the context of the requirements placed on the Council by Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, namely, the duty on the Council to exercise its functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder in its area. It is not considered that the contents of this report have any such effect.

**Impact on Looked After Children**

9. The high rate of Initial Assessments ensures early identification of Safeguarding issues that may necessitate children becoming looked after, if that is the only possible intervention to

keep them safe.

### **Conclusion**

10. “Performance appears good overall in this area” (Annual Performance Assessment 2007)

### **Recommendation**

11. Members are asked to note the contents of this report.

**Murray Rose**  
**Director of Children’s Services**

### **Background Papers**

Breakdown of referrals by various agencies during period April 2007 – April 2008.

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