

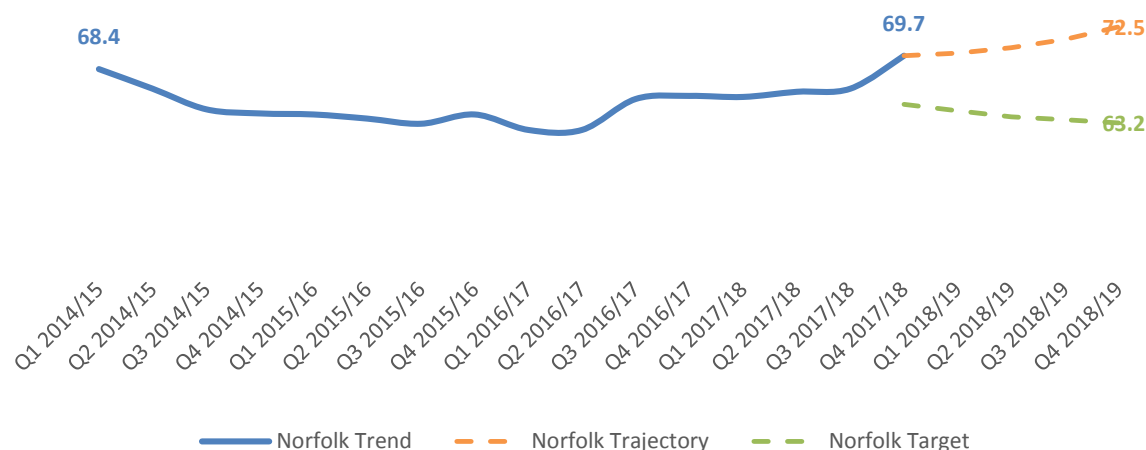
Rate of Looked-After Children per 10,000 of the overall 0-17 population

Why is this important?

Norfolk has many more LAC than its statistical neighbours and we have implemented a strategy to reduce the levels of LAC. LAC rate per 10k is a key indicator in assessing the success of that investment. The LAC rate also provides an indication of the success of the wider children's system.

Performance

Rate of Looked-After Children per 10,000 of the overall 0-17 population



What is the background to current performance?

- Historically Norfolk has had a high rate of LAC, and while numbers reduced between 2014 & 2016, increases have been seen over the past two years, to their current peak in March. This should be viewed in the context of increases in LAC numbers across England leading to record numbers of LAC nationally.
- While LAC numbers increased rapidly between December 2017 & February 2018, the numbers have since stabilised.
- Understanding and addressing our Looked After Children numbers remains a priority and a key element of our Transformation programme.

Action required

- Continue to strengthen Norfolk's Early Help offer to ensure families receive help as soon as it is required, working to enhance their strengths & overcome issues so they can remain together.
- Where appropriate and desired, work with current LAC and their families to enable them to have the skills & understanding to live together again.
- Where appropriate and in the best interests of the child, promote adoption and special guardianship as a means of securing permanence for children.

What will success look like?

- The rate of Looked-After Children per 10k 0-17s is in line with rates in other similar local authorities within England (around 53 as at March 2015 and recent trends have shown that LAC rates among similar authorities are rising, from around 48 in 2013).

- Access to Care panel has been reviewed. A 50 case audit was undertaken and the findings positively reflect that the decisions made are right for those children.
- Innovative ways of working to reduce the number of children coming into care are always being explored. New ways of working include introduction to rapid response team, family finding training for staff at different levels. Plans to change the front door model, which will release capacity in the system.
- Being more robust and tenacious considering permanency options outside of being LAC.

Responsible Officers

Lead: Phil Watson Data: Andy Goff