

ADCS DCS Update 2018/19

Introduction

As of 31 March 2019 there were 152 upper tier local authorities (LAs) in England. Current legislation requires each of these LAs to appoint a director of children's services (DCS). Due to the statutory nature of the post, there must always be a named DCS which results, on occasion, in short-term interim arrangements taking place when a serving post-holder leaves. The chief executives of trust/ADM arrangements are equivalent to DCSs in terms of ADCS membership, however, we do not refer to a Trust as being a separate LA for the purpose of this report.

ADCS has gathered and recorded detailed information about changes in post-holders of the statutory DCS role since the Association was established in 2007. We also record the number of directors who hold both statutory roles of DCS and DASS (referred to in this report as 'twin hat').

The analysis that follows focusses on the ADCS membership year 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019. It also offers some year-on-year comparisons, several of which date back to 2007, in order to highlight trends and patterns of change.

If you have any queries or proposed amendments of the data, or if you wish to reproduce this data in part or in full, please contact gary.dumbarton@adcs.org.uk.

Headlines

- 51 DCS changes in total taking place across 40 LAs (including all interim appointments)
- 17 new permanent DCS appointments
- Currently 40 'twin hatters'
- Average length of time served as a DCS, when factoring in cumulative time spent in multiple LAs as a DCS, is approximately 4 years
- 55% of current DCSs are female
- 13 interim DCSs currently in post.

DCS changes

During 2018/19 there were 51 changes in DCS post-holder – the total number of changes includes every change, inclusive of brief interim periods prior to substantive appointment. The changes have taken place across 40 LAs – this means that almost 75% of LAs (112) have not experienced a change in the DCS post-holder across the reporting period.

During 2018/19 there were:

- 17 new DCS appointments, the second lowest number within a reporting year since ADCS was established in 2007 (there were 16 new DCS appointments during 2016/17)
 - 13 were from assistant director/second tier level
 - 2 instances of an existing DASS becoming 'twin hatter' (one from within the same LA and one from another LA)
 - 2 other
- 20 interim appointments

- 13 of which have been filled by assistant directors (11 from within the same LA, 2 from another LA)
- 7 have been filled by former DCSs
- 11 DCSs have moved post from one LA to another
- 1 new multi-LA arrangement established
- 2 former DCSs returning to the statutory DCS role.

The total of 51 changes is a significant drop compared to the previous period (65 changes in total for 2017/18). The average number of total changes in DCS post-holder per year is currently 47.7.

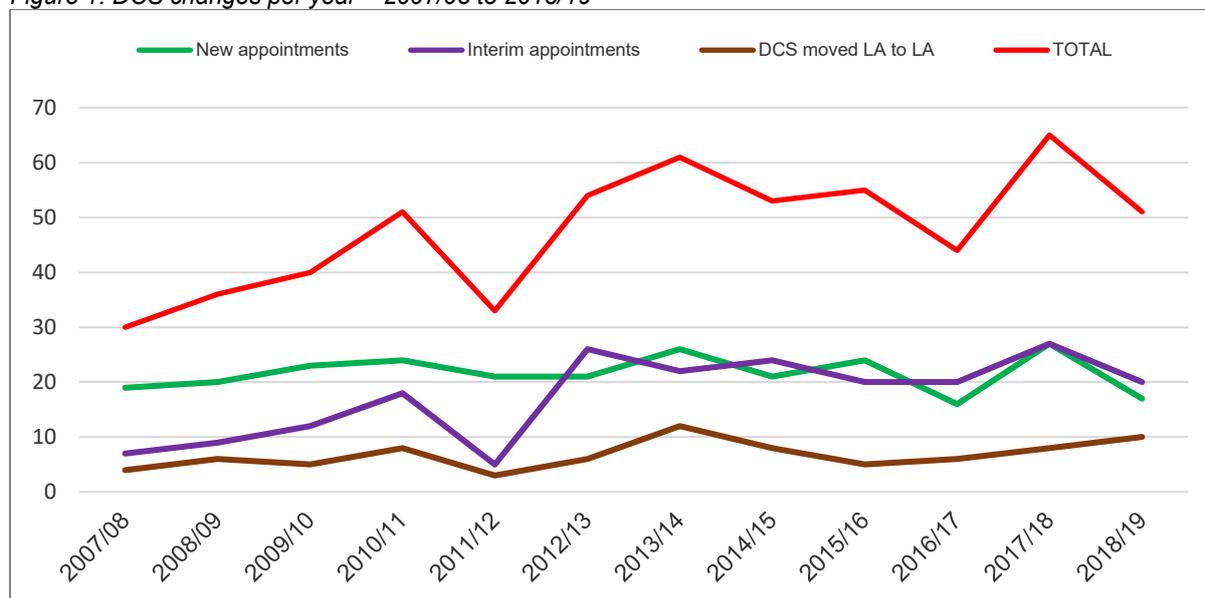
The 51 changes have taken place across 40 LAs: five LAs have each experienced two DCS changes and three LAs have each experienced three changes over the 12 month period. Many of these changes have taken place due to short-term interim appointments being made prior to a permanent appointment commencing.

The number of interim appointments has remained relatively consistent over recent years. The majority have been short-term appointments pending a permanent appointment being made and have been filled by former substantive DCSs or assistant director/second tier level officers.

There are currently 13 interim post holders. 11 are in a DCS only post and two are in a 'twin hat' post. Six of the current interim directors have previously been a DCS in another LA.

Figure 1 provides an illustration of the trends in DCS change since ADCS was established in 2007.

Figure 1. DCS changes per year – 2007/08 to 2018/19



DCS changes per region

The amount of total change in DCS post-holder from 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019 by region is illustrated in Figure 2.

It is important to note that three of the changes in the East Midlands region took place in a single LA and that six of the changes in the South East took place across two LAs.

Figure 2. DCS changes per region (actual) – 2018/19

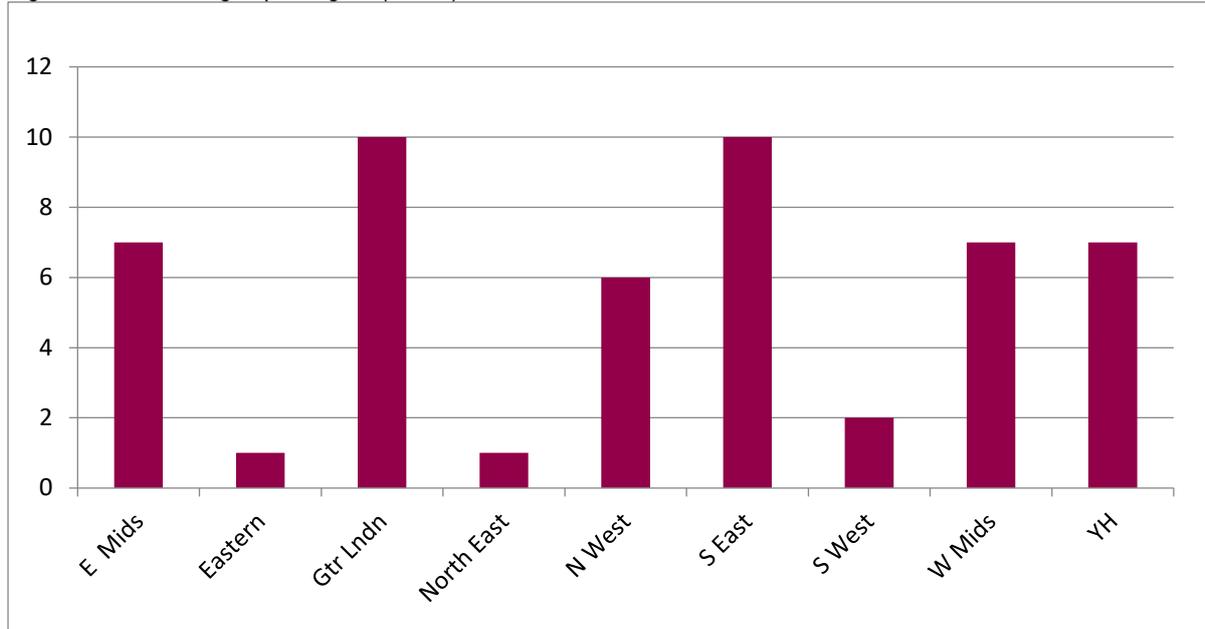


Figure 3. DCS changes per region (%) – 2007/08 to 2018/19

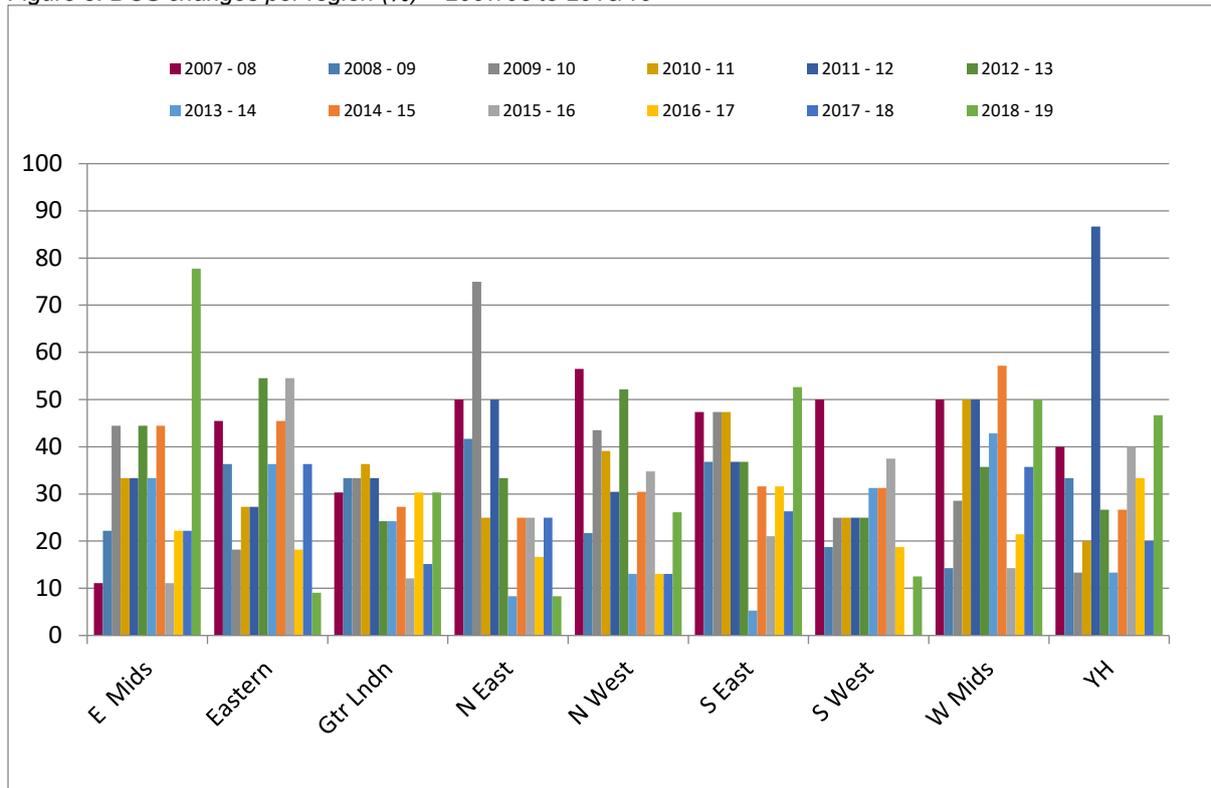


Figure 3 illustrates the amount of change in percentage, by region, from 2007/08 to 2018/19 and shows that the average amount of change in DCS post-holder per year is around 30%. On average the East Midlands, Greater London and the South West regions are the most stable.

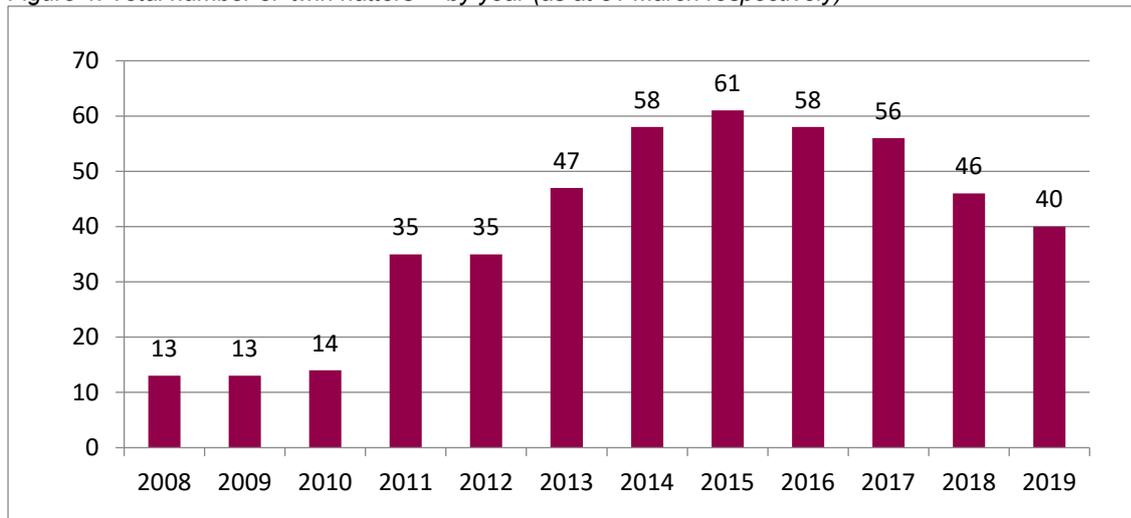
Areas of responsibility

As of 31 March 2019, there were 40 'twin hat' directors – the lowest since 2012.

There are also a number of LAs where the director has overall responsibility for children and adult services, but whilst holding the statutory duty for children's services, they do not also hold the statutory duty for adult services. For the purposes of this report these arrangements are not considered 'twin hat'.

Figure 4 illustrates the continuing downwards trend of LAs with 'twin hat' directors.

Figure 4. Total number of 'twin hatters' – by year (as at 31 March respectively)

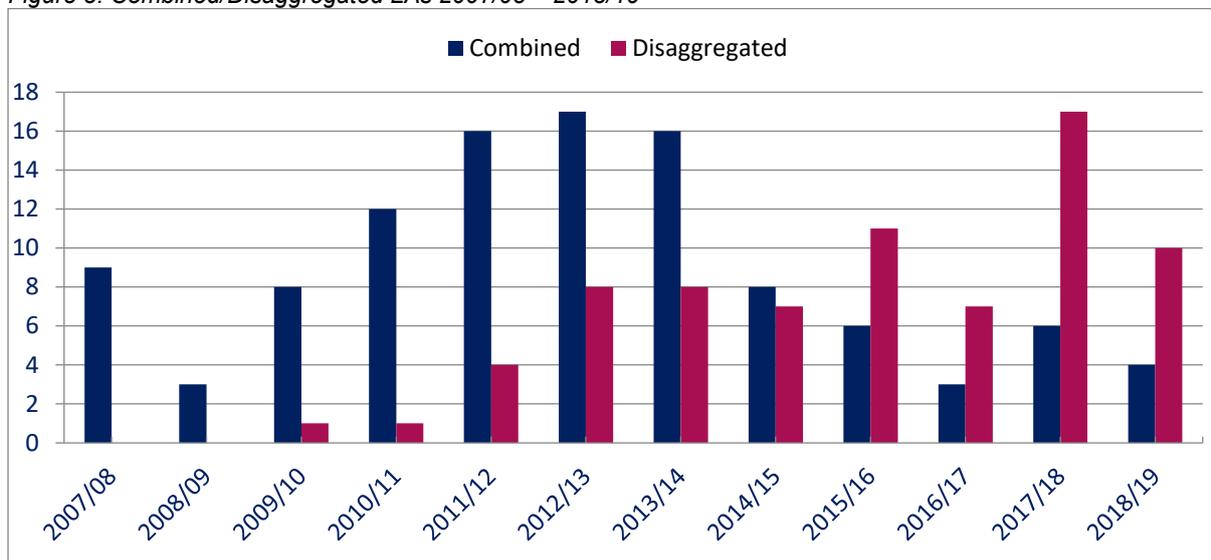


Combined and disaggregated services

Since ADCS was established in 2007, 108 of the current 152 LAs have at some point had a 'twin hat' director. 44 LAs have never combined the DCS and DASS role. The picture continues to change as LAs combine and disaggregate services. During the past 12 months, 10 LAs have disaggregated services and four LAs have combined services.

Figure 5 illustrates the increasing trend in disaggregating services, coupled with low numbers of LAs combining services.

Figure 5. Combined/Disaggregated LAs 2007/08 – 2018/19



Time in post

The average duration of a DCS in post in the same LA (based on all interim and permanent appointments from 2007 to 31 March 2019) is 29 months – across all permanent appointments it is 37 months and for all interim appointments it is 7 months.

The average tenure of current post-holders is 30 months; 32 months for permanent post holders and 9 months for interim post holders. Many DCSs have been the DCS in a number of LAs. The average length of time served as a DCS, when factoring in cumulative time spent in multiple LAs as a DCS, is 47 months (based on all interim and permanent appointments from 2007 to 31 March 2019).

DCSs in more than one LA

60 (39%) of the current post holders have been DCS in more than one LA in either permanent, interim or multi-LA arrangements (largely interim), showing that experience is valued and that expertise is not being lost from the sector.

Four DCSs are currently in multi-LA arrangements, which involves a DCS holding statutory responsibility in more than one LA simultaneously.

DCSs per local authority

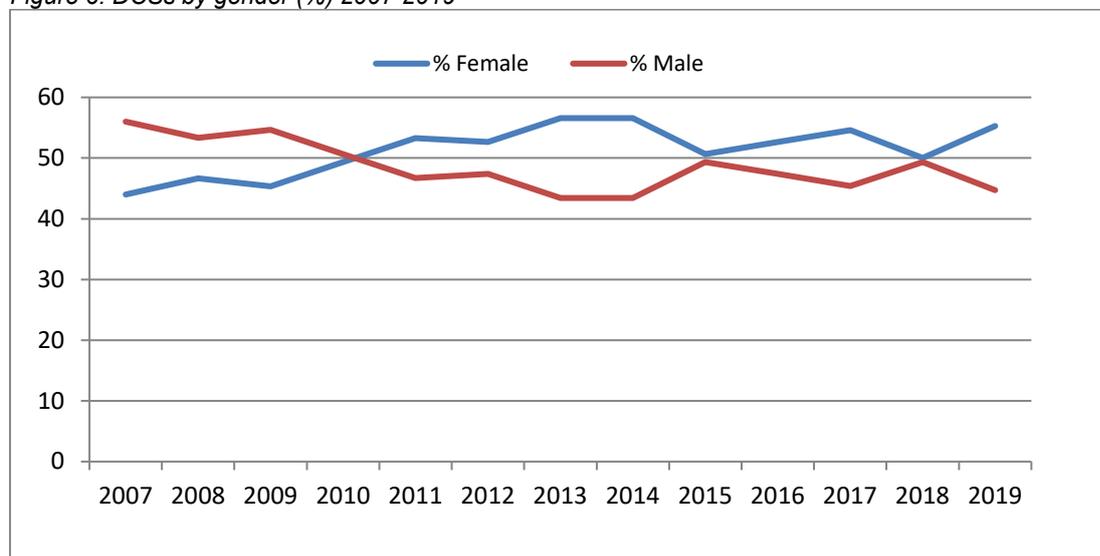
The average number of DCSs per LA, including interim appointments, since ADCS was established in 2007 is now 4.95 (a 0.3 increase on the previous year). 115 of the 152 LAs have now had four or more DCSs. One LA has had 10 DCSs (five permanent and five interim), whilst another six LAs have had nine DCSs. 10 LAs have had two DCSs across the same period.

Gender and ethnicity

As of 31 March 2019 there were 84 LAs with female directors and 68 LAs with male directors. Of the 84 LAs with female directors, 19 are 'twin hatters'. Of the 68 LAs with a male director, 22 are 'twin hatters'. Of the 13 interim directors currently in post, six are female and seven are male.

During the 2019/20 membership year ADCS will begin collecting ethnicity data from across the membership and will report on this in the 2020 DCS update.

Figure 6. DCSs by gender (%) 2007-2019



Alternative Delivery Models and Trust arrangements

There are a number of Alternative Delivery Models (ADMs) currently providing aspects of children's services on behalf of LAs:

- Achieving for Children provides children's services on behalf of the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames and the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames. Until 2018 a single DCS held the statutory duties for both LAs. The arrangement has now changed and each LA currently has a separate DCS, but both remain under the umbrella of Achieving for Children
- Achieving for Children also provides services on behalf of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead
- Together for Children provides children's services on behalf of Sunderland City Council
- Brighter Futures for Children provides children's services on behalf of Reading Council
- Children First Northamptonshire provides children's services on behalf of Northamptonshire County Council.

Trust arrangements

As at 31 March 2019 trust arrangements are in place in Birmingham, Doncaster, Sandwell and Slough.

Slough Children's Services Trust is the only Trust arrangement which has experienced change in its Chief Executive post-holder.

Doncaster Children's Services Trust will become an arms length management organisation (ALMO) from April 2019.

Additional information / future changes

For consistency of reporting purposes this analysis is based upon changes from 1 April to 31 March inclusive. Therefore, some upcoming changes that are already known do not figure in the numbers.

Local government reorganisation

As of 1 April 2019 three LAs in the Dorset area have reorganised to form two unitary LAs.

Bournemouth and Poole have merged with Christchurch District Council to form Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council.

Dorset County Council has reorganised, minus Christchurch District Council, and becomes Dorset Council – a unitary council.

ADM

Worcestershire Children First – a new ADM is scheduled to go live on 1 October 2019.