

Report of Director of Children's Services

Report to Executive Board

Date: 25th June 2014

Subject: Annual Reports of the fostering and adoption service & annual updates of the respective Statements of Purpose.



Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary of main issues

1. It is a requirement of the National Minimum Standards 2011 for fostering and adoption that the Executive Board of the council receives written reports on the management and outcomes of the fostering and adoption services. These reports provide an overview of fostering and adoption service activity from April 2013 to March 2014. The reports are attached at appendix 1 and appendix 2 respectively.

The report also seeks elected member approval of the revised Statements of Purpose for Leeds City Council's Fostering and Adoption Services. The Statement of Purpose for each service is attached at appendix 3 and appendix 4. In each case the Statement of Purpose is required as part of the national minimum standards in order to be able to provide those services.

Recommendations

1. It is recommended that the Executive Board approve the Statements of Purpose for both the Fostering and Adoption Services for Leeds City Council. It is also recommended that the Executive Board reviews the annual fostering and adoption report and continues to support the work of the adoption and fostering service to ensure children receive the best possible support.
2. Note the responsible officer is the Head of Looked After Children.

1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 This report asks the Executive Board to consider the annual reports of the fostering and adoption services, as detailed in Appendix 1 and 2 of this report, as required by the National Minimum Standards 2011.
- 1.2 This report seeks elected member approval of the revised statements of purpose for Leeds City Council's Fostering and Adoption Services. The Statement of Purpose for each service is attached at appendix 3 and appendix 4 respectively. In each case the Statement of Purpose is required as part of the national minimum standard in order to be able to provide those services.

2 Background information

- 2.1 It is a requirement of the National Minimum Standards for Adoption and Fostering Services, that each fostering and adoption service produces a statement of purpose, including its aims and objectives, a description of the service it provides and the facilities that are provided. This Statement of Purpose gives an outline of those requirements and also how the service is managed and its fitness to provide a comprehensive adoption service.
- 2.2 The Fostering Agency and Adoption Agency is inspected against these standards by Ofsted.
- 2.3 The statements of purpose and any updates must be approved through the 'Executive side of the council' on an annual basis.
- 2.4 The Statement of Purposes attached give an outline of those requirements and also how the service is managed and its fitness to provide fostering and adoption services. It shows the policy and performance framework that underpins our work and shows how the welfare of children will be met. It also demonstrates the systems which we have set in place to recruit, train, supervise and support foster carers and adoptive parents.
- 2.5 The Council's Executive Board is the most appropriate body to provide formal approval for both of the statements of Purpose and to review the work of the fostering and adoption service.
- 2.6 The background issues in relation to the fostering and adoption annual reports are addressed in detail in the reports themselves at Appendix 1 and 2.

3 Main issues

- 3.1 The statements and annual reports were last submitted to Executive Board in June 2013.
- 3.2 The changes in the statements this year are minimal and relate mainly to organisational and structural changes within the service as well as some changes in the adopter recruitment process, as part of the adoption reform agenda. The fostering service has expanded with the addition of a second kinship team to enable focus to be given to the support to kinship carers and special guardians.

4 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

4.1.1 The fostering and adoption service have good mechanisms to consult with and engage foster carers and adoptive families in order to develop and deliver services.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

4.2.1 The service completed a full Equality Impact Assessment in 2011 (attached at appendix 5). This was reviewed in December 2012 with recommendations made to address the need to recruit more adoptive families from BME communities. A full Equality Impact assessment is due this next year.

4.3 Council policies and City Priorities

4.3.1 The Children and Young Peoples Plan identifies Looked After Children as one of the three priority 'Obsessions'. The fostering and adoption service is integral to this plan to provide stable and secure placements for looked after children and those placed for adoption.

4.4 Resources and value for money

4.4.1 There is no resource implication other than the already existing adoption and fostering budgets required for carrying out the services described in the statements.

4.4.2 The statements themselves do not require extra budgetary provision.

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

4.5.1 This is addressed in 2.1- 2.6 above and is subject to call in.

4.6 Risk Management

4.6.1 Not applicable

5 Conclusions

5.1 This report seeks that Executive Board review the annual reports, as outlined in Appendix 1 and 2, and continue to support the work of the fostering and adoption services to ensure our children receive the best possible support.

5.2 This report also seeks Elected Member approval of the revised statements of purpose for Leeds City Council's Fostering and Adoption Services. The Statement of Purpose for each service is attached at appendix 3 and appendix 4 respectively. In each case the Statement of Purpose is required as part of the national minimum standards in order to be able to provide those services.

6 Recommendations

- 6.1 It is recommended that the Executive Board approve the Statements of Purpose for both the Fostering and Adoption Services for Leeds City Council. It is also recommended that the Executive Board reviews the annual fostering and adoption report and continues to support the work of the adoption and fostering service to ensure children receive the best possible support.
- 6.2 Note the responsible Officer is the Head of Looked After Children.

7 Background documents¹

- 7.1 None

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.