



Report of the Director of Children's Services

Executive Board

14th January 2008

Subject: Statements of purpose for the fostering and adoption services of Leeds City Council

Electoral Wards Affected:

No specific issues for wards

Ward Members consulted
(referred to in report)

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

Eligible for Call In

Not Eligible for Call In
(Details contained in the report)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. 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 1 and appendix 2 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.

RECOMMENDATIONS

2. It is recommended that the Executive Board approve the Statements of Purpose for both the Fostering and Adoption services for Leeds City Council.

1.0 Purpose Of This Report

- 1.1 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 1 and appendix 2 respectively. The report briefly explains the requirement within the adoption regulations and the fostering regulations that each statement of purpose should be formally approved by elected members'.

2.0 Background Information

Adoptions

- 2.1 The Adoption National Minimum Standards 2003 require every adoption agency to write a statement of purpose that is 'a clear written statement of the aims and objectives of the adoption (service), which describes accurately what facilities and services they provide'. It should also include details of 'its organisation and control of its operation' and 'its function'. The adoption agency must approve annually the statement of purpose and any updates through the 'Executive side of the council'.
- 2.2 Since the introduction of the Children's Services Directorate the Statement of Purpose for the Adoption Service has not been submitted to elected members. It is important to address this and now is a timely opportunity to do so given that the document has recently been revised to reflect the current leadership arrangements within Children and Young People's Social Care.

Fostering

- 2.3 The Fostering Minimum Standards 2002 require a similar 'statement of the aims and objectives of the fostering service and what facilities and services they provide' and 'the management structure'. Elected members must formally approve the statement annually. This approval has not yet taken place at an appropriate level, although the Council's Corporate Carers Group have considered the Statement of Purpose, they are not in a position to 'formally approve' it. The Council's Executive Board is the most appropriate body to provide this formal approval. Again it is timely to do this given the recent changes to leadership arrangements within Children and Young People's Social Care. Seeking elected member's formal approval of the Statement was also a recommendation of the recent fostering service inspection.

3.0 Main Issues

- 3.1 The attached statements of purpose for both the fostering and adoption services have recently been revised to reflect the leadership arrangements within Children and Young People's Social Care. As such, and in line with the relevant guidance, they require approval by elected members.

4.0 Implications For Council Policy And Governance

- 4.1 The implications for governance are covered in paragraphs 2.1 to 2.3 above.

5.0 Legal And Resource Implications

- 5.1 There are no resource implications other than the already existing adoption and fostering budgets required for carrying out the services described in the statements. The statements themselves do not require extra budgetary provision.

6.0 Conclusions

- 6.1 The guidelines for both the Adoption and Fostering service Statements of Purpose detail the need to seek elected member approval annually for any updates. Approval of both these documents is therefore required and this is a timely opportunity to do so given recent developments in Children and Young People's Social Care.

7.0 Recommendations

- 7.1 It is recommended that the Executive Board approve the Statements of Purpose for both the Fostering and Adoption services for Leeds City Council.

Background Papers

Adoption National Minimum Standards Regulations, Voluntary Adoption Agencies and Local Authorities in England and Wales 2003

Fostering Services, National Minimum Standards, Fostering Service Regulations 2002