
Report of Head of Scrutiny and Member Development

Report to Scrutiny Board (Children and Families)

Date: 23rd August 2012

Subject: Scrutiny Inquiry into Private Fostering (Cover report)

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 type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" 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. At its meeting on the 20th of June 2012, the Scrutiny Board resolved to undertake an Inquiry into Private Fostering as there was considerable concern about how private foster care arrangements are identified by Leeds City Council and how children and young people party to a private arrangement are safe and protected.
2. The Board agreed terms of reference for an inquiry on the 26th of July 2012
3. The British Association for Adoption and Fostering has been invited to attend the meeting on order to discuss Private Fostering from their perspective.
4. The Director of Children's Services has provided a report detailing information requested at the meeting of the Board 26th July 2012.

Recommendations

4. Members are asked to:

- Note the information contained within this report, the report of the Director of Children's Services and the information presented at the meeting.

1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 For the purposes of the inquiry the British Association for Adoption and Fostering (BAAF) has been invited to attend the meeting on order to discuss private fostering arrangements.
- 1.4 The Board is also asked to consider the report of the Director of Children's Services, which provides the Board with information requested at the meeting of the Board on 26th of July.

2 Background information

Background information is provided relating to BAAF to provide the Board with an overview of the organisation and the services provided to support private foster carers, the children they care for and professionals.

BAAF is a registered charity who support, advise and campaign for better outcomes for children in care. They work with everyone involved with adoption and fostering across the UK with regional and country offices in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, providing services to meet the needs of some of the UK's most vulnerable children and young people.

Their work includes family-finding, producing publications, training, conferences, consultancy, campaigning and advice.

Their website 'Somebody else's child', <http://www.privatefostering.org.uk/> provides comprehensive information to assist private foster carers, children and young people and professionals. Relevant extracts from this site are attached to assist the Scrutiny Board with their inquiry. (Appendix 1 – 3)

3 Corporate Considerations

3.1 Consultation and Engagement

- 3.1.1 This section is not relevant to this report

3.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

- 3.2.1 During the conduct of the Scrutiny Inquiry there may be positive equality, diversity, cohesion and integration outcomes for groups and this would be reflected in the Scrutiny Inquiry Report once published.

3.3 Council policies and City Priorities

- 3.3.1 This inquiry will assist in achieving outcomes and priorities as defined in the Children and Young Peoples Plan 2011-2-15 and the Child Friendly City Priority Plan.

3.4 Resources and value for money

- 3.4.1 This section is not relevant to this report

3.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

3.5.1 There is no restricted or confidential information contained in this report.

3.6 Risk Management

3.6.1 This section is not relevant to this report

4 Conclusions

4.1 BAAF will be attending the Scrutiny Board meeting (Children and Families) on the 23rd August 2012 to assist Board members with the inquiry and answer questions arising.

5 Recommendations

5.1 Members are asked to:

- Note the information contained within this report, the report of the Director of Children's Services and the information presented at the meeting.

6 Background documents¹

6.1 None

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available for inspection on request for a period of four years following the date of the relevant meeting. Accordingly this list does not include documents containing exempt or confidential information, or any published works. Requests to inspect any background documents should be submitted to the report author.