



EXECUTIVE BOARD DECISION

REPORT OF: Executive Member for Children's Services

LEAD OFFICER: Director of Children's Services

DATE: 8th December 2016

PORTFOLIO/S AFFECTED: Children's Services

WARD/S AFFECTED: All

KEY DECISION: YES NO

SUBJECT: Fostering Service Quarterly Report - July – September 2016

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides information to the Council's Executive Board on the management and performance of the Local Authority's Fostering Service.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Executive Board:
Notes the quarterly report which is available on the Council website.

3. BACKGROUND

The Fostering Service Regulations 2011 and the National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services requires the Council Executive to:

- a) Receive written reports on the management, outcomes and financial state of the Fostering Service every 3 months;
- b) Monitor the management and outcomes of the services in order to satisfy themselves that the Service is effective and is achieving good outcomes for children; and
- c) Satisfy themselves that the provider is complying with the conditions of registration.

The report has been written to address the issues identified above. It will be taken into account by OFSTED in inspecting the Service.

This report is for the second quarter of 2016 - 2017, covering the period from 1st July to 30th September 2016, and provides an overview of the Service.

4. KEY ISSUES

The number of children coming into the care system has now increased to 365 and keeping up with the demand for placements is becoming increasingly difficult. Despite this, the majority of children admitted in Quarter 2 were placed in-house. 7 new commissioned placements were made and were

offset by 5 commissioned placements coming to an end.

An online recruitment campaign commenced in Quarter 2 and continued into Quarter 3. The campaign for carers for children with complex health needs and disabilities brought very little interest but the campaign focussing on parent-child placements has generated a number of initial enquiries that are being followed up. July's Fostering Panel approved 5 new carer households and the overall number of carers increased in Quarter 2.

The new approach to foster carer training commenced in September. Carers will now attend two out of three full day conferences a year rather than lots of short courses which is what they have said is their preference. The first conference went well with good attendance and positive feedback. An optional conference addressing placement stability will also be offered.

Placement stability improved in Quarter 2. The Fostering Support Service is now embedded and is supporting between 10 and 15 placements every quarter. Feedback on this service from young people and carers is positive.

5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

No policy implications identified.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

No financial implications identified.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

This report is required to meet statutory requirements as outlined in section 3.

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

No resource implications identified.

9. EQUALITY AND HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

Please select one of the options below. Where appropriate please include the hyperlink to the EIA.

Option 1 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) not required – the EIA checklist has been completed.

Option 2 In determining this matter the Executive Member needs to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision. *(insert EIA link here)*

Option 3 In determining this matter the Executive Board members need to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision. *(insert EIA attachment)*

10. CONSULTATIONS

None.

11. STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

The recommendations are made further to advice from the Monitoring Officer and the Section 151 Officer has confirmed that they do not incur unlawful expenditure. They are also compliant with equality legislation and an equality analysis and impact assessment has been considered. The recommendations reflect the core principles of good governance set out in the Council's Code of

Corporate Governance.

12. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

All Declarations of Interest of any Executive Member consulted and note of any dispensation granted by the Chief Executive will be recorded in the Summary of Decisions published on the day following the meeting.

VERSION: 1.0

CONTACT OFFICER: Alyson Hanson – Service Leader, Placement Services

DATE: 1st November 2016

BACKGROUND PAPER: Fostering Service Quarterly Report July to Sept 2016

