



EXECUTIVE BOARD DECISION

REPORT OF: Executive Member for Children's Services

LEAD OFFICERS: Director of Children's Services

DATE: 13 September 2018

PORTFOLIO/S AFFECTED: Children's Services

WARD/S AFFECTED: All

KEY DECISION: YES NO

SUBJECT:
Fostering Service Quarter 1 Report 1st April to 30th June 2018

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides information 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's website

3. BACKGROUND

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

- a) Receives 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;
- 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.

The report is for the first quarter of 2018 - 19 covering the period from 1st April to 30th June 2018 and provides an overview of the service.

4. KEY ISSUES & RISKS

1. Whilst the number of children in care reduced significantly in Quarter 1 the availability of foster placements both in-house and via the independent sector remains challenging. The service is working hard to recruit new foster carers and have approved 5 sets of new carers in Quarter 1 with the percentage of children who are in care and in foster placements increasing by 4%. 28 children entered care for the first time in Quarter 1 and 21 of them were placed with in-house foster carers.

2. The fostering team has been restructured to accommodate an increase in the volume of family and friends work. From Quarter 2 the service will pick up all viability assessments and combined family and friends / Special Guardianship Orders (SGO) assessments which have been historically shared with other teams. This work will be undertaken more efficiently by the fostering service as it reflects the expertise that exists in the service. Whilst the new arrangement will not start until Quarter 2 a great deal of preparatory work including the recruitment of two additional social workers has been undertaken in Quarter 1. Whilst the number of approved family and friends carers has remained fairly static, the number of assessments has been high.

3. Foster carer training was reviewed at the end of the last financial year and whilst the conference approach will continue a Service Manager is focussing on the development of online training which will be useful for those carers who work full time and struggle to attend daytime conferences.

4. Placement stability rates have improved. A number of placements are supported by the Revive Team and a small number of young people are additionally supported by short breaks either in foster care or through the adolescent support unit. The Saturday Club for 8 to 11 year olds is very popular.

5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

No policy implications identified

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

No financial implications have been identified

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

This report is required to meet statutory requirements as set out in the 'National Minimum Standards for Fostering.'

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

No resource implications have been 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
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CONTACT OFFICER:	Alyson Hanson - Service Leader, Placement Services
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DATE:	8 th August 2018
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BACKGROUND PAPER:	Fostering Service Quarterly Report 1 st April to 30 th June 2018 – Quarter 1
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