

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

Decision Maker:	Executive Lead Member for Children Services
Date:	23 July 2014
Title:	Statement of Purpose of the Hampshire Fostering Service Adoption Service and Residential Homes.
Reference:	5788
Report From:	Director of Children's Services

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1. Executive Summary

1.1. National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services, Children's Homes and for Adoption Services require that the registered provider (in the case of a local authority, the elected members) formally approves the Statement of Purpose of Services, and reviews, updates and modifies it where necessary, at least annually.

1.2. The aim of this report therefore is to present the updated Statement of Purpose of Hampshire's Fostering, Adoption Services and Children's Homes (see Appendices) for approval by the Executive Member, highlighting the key parts of the document that have been revised since it was last presented.

2. Contextual Information

2.1 The Regulations and Guidance for Fostering Service, Adoption Services and for Children's Homes state that the service provider (in this instance, Hampshire Children's Services Department) shall compile, in relation to the service, a written statement, referred to as The Statement of Purpose, which shall consist of:

- a) A statement of the aims and objectives of the service; and
- b) A statement as to the services and facilities to be provided by the service.

2.2 The provider is responsible for providing a copy of the Statement of Purpose to Ofsted, the body which inspects the services, and the following key stakeholders:

- i. Any person working for the purposes of the service;
- ii. Any foster/ adoptive parent or prospective foster/ adoptive parent
- iii. Any child placed within any of the services; and
- iv. The parent of any such child.

2.3 A children's version of the Statement of Purpose is also available

2.4 The proposals in this report are expected to support the County Council's corporate priorities as follows:

"Making Hampshire safer and more secure for all" – by enabling as many of Hampshire's children as possible, who are looked after, to remain in their local communities and to fully participate in and contribute to the life of those communities.

"Maximising well-being" – by ensuring that Hampshire's children who are looked after are provided with good quality family based care placements that meet their needs and enable them to move successfully through their transition to independence.

"Enhancing our quality of place" – through provision of high quality services that target those children who are the most vulnerable.

3. Key Issues

Revisions to the Statement of Purpose:

Fostering Services:

3.1 The Fostering Service uses the Statement of Purpose as a competitive positioning tool, which benchmarks local authority and independent services. This is useful in recruitment terms as prospective carers can compare services more easily. Flexibility and responsiveness are highlighted to promote Hampshire's position.

3.2 References to the Fostering Service and descriptions and diagrams of how the service is structured are presented in a way that is appropriate to the audience who are reading the statement of purpose and understanding how the fostering service operates.

3.3 Learning and development for foster carers is being reformed placing emphasis on pre-approval training to equip foster carers with the required skills and knowledge and post-approval training is also being remodelled. This is outlined in the statement of purpose.

3.4 New regulations now mean there is a Two Stage Assessment process for assessing prospective foster carers which is illustrated in the statement.

Children's Residential Care

3. 5 Hampshire has six children's homes for local children whose needs cannot be met within a family environment. They are all mixed sex units and range from 4-7 beds located throughout Hampshire, accommodating a total of 34 children. In addition there is a secure children's home for 16 children. This is a national resource and accommodates children under both criminal and welfare orders.

- Godbey House is located in Hayling Island. This six bedded home accommodates children and young people aged between 12- 17 years
- Glendalyn Children's Home is in New Milton. This seven bedded home accommodates children and young people aged between 12- 17 years
- Milesdown Children's Home is in Winchester. This six bedded home accommodates children and young people aged between 12- 17 years
- The Greenhouse Children's Home is located in Chandlers Ford. This six bedded home accommodates children and young people aged between 12- 17 years.
- The Mead is located in Odiham. This five bedded home accommodates children and young people aged between 12- 17 years
- Cypress Lodge is Hampshire's smallest children's home located in Basingstoke and accommodates four children and young people aged between 12- 17 years.

3.7 Swanwick Lodge is a secure children's home. Swanwick Lodge is a secure children's home. It accommodates up to 16 young people of either gender. 4 children are accommodated through a contract with the Youth Justice Board (YJB) and the home has provision for a further 8 Youth Justice beds if 'spot purchased' by the YJB. In addition, 4 beds are for children who need to be secured for their own safety, under section 25 of the Children Act. Both criminal and welfare beds are a national resource and the home is a self financing business unit. The unit is subject to the same regulations and inspection regime as open children's homes but with some additional requirements which are specific to its secure setting.

3.8 The Statements of Purpose have been updated to reflect the changes within regulation and any staffing changes.

Short Break Homes

3.7 As part of the continuum of short-break resources supporting children and young people with complex learning difficulties (including autism) and their families Hampshire County Council has three residential homes, each which

offer programmed overnight provision. Access to the services is via a county resource panel that meets monthly under the chairmanship of the Integrated Disability Manager.

- Sunbeams is situated in Aldershot and can accommodate up to four children/young people overnight.
- Firvale is in Basingstoke and can accommodate up to nine children/young people. It is jointly managed between Hampshire County Council and Basingstoke and North Hants Foundation Trust.
- Merrydale is based in Winchester and is registered to accommodate up to thirteen children/young people.

3.8 The Statements of Purpose have been updated to comply with the requirements of Schedule 1 of The Children's Homes and Looked after Children (Miscellaneous Amendments) (England) Regulations 2013 and also detail the experience and qualifications of staff currently employed at the homes.

Adoption Service

3.9 Hampshire's Adoption Service has been through significant change, meeting the Governmental agenda for service improvement. These changes are reflected in the Adoption Service Statement of Purpose.

3.10 Since the 1 of September 2012 Children's Plans for Adoption are no longer required to be presented to the Adoption Panel and instead are considered directly by the Agency Decision Maker prior to the final hearing and Placement Order application.

3.11 A new assessment process for prospective adopters was implemented during 2013. This introduced a new two stage assessment process which lasts for a maximum of six months for most applicants.

3.12 Hampshire trialled the new Prospective Adopters Report as part of the British Association of Adoption and Fostering (BAAF) pilot project. The service has been using this reporting format for all new assessments from April 2013.

4. Recommendation

4.1 That the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services approves the updated Statement of Purpose for the Fostering Service, Adoption Service and Children's Homes.

CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:**Links to the Corporate Strategy**

Hampshire safer and more secure for all:	yes
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	
Maximising well-being:	yes
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	
Enhancing our quality of place:	yes
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	

Other Significant Links

Links to previous Member decisions:		
<u>Title</u> Statement of Purpose Executive Member Report	<u>Reference</u> 4669	<u>Date</u> 25 March 2013
Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives		
<u>Title</u> Children Act Care Standards Act Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations Children's Home Regulations		<u>Date</u> 1989/2004 2000 2011 2001/2011

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

<p>Fostering Services: National Minimum Standards</p>	<p>https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fostering-services-national-minimum-standards</p>
<p>Short Breaks: Statutory guidance on how to safeguard and promote the welfare of disabled children using short breaks</p>	<p>https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationDetail/Page1/DCSF-00183-2010</p>
<p>Short Breaks: Advice for Local Authorities</p>	<p>http://media.education.gov.uk/assets/files/pdf/s/short%20breaks%20-%20advice%20for%20local%20authorities.pdf</p>
<p>Children's Homes: National Minimum Standards</p>	<p>http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130401151715/https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/NMS%20Children's%20Homes.pdf</p>
<p>Adoption: National Minimum Standards</p>	<p>http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130401151715/https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/Adoption-NMS.pdf</p>
<p>Assessment and Approval of Foster Carers</p>	<p>https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/275764/20130522statutory_guidanceassessment_and_approval_of_foster_carers_final.pdf</p>
<p>Adoption: Statutory Guidance 2013</p>	<p>https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/adoption-statutory-guidance-2013</p>

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:

1. Equalities Impact Assessment:

- 1.1. Equality and diversity objectives are not considered to be adversely affected by the proposals in this report.

2. Impact on Crime and Disorder:

- 2.1. Crime and disorder objectives are not considered to be adversely affected by the proposals in this report.

3. Climate Change:

- a) How does what is being proposed impact on our carbon footprint / energy consumption?

Climate change is not considered to be affected by the proposals in this report.

- b) How does what is being proposed consider the need to adapt to climate change, and be resilient to its longer term impacts?