

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

Decision Maker:	Executive Lead Member for Children's Services
Date:	25 May 2016
Title:	Statement of Purpose of the Hampshire Fostering Service Adoption Service and Residential Homes.
Reference:	7377
Report From:	Director of Children's Services

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1. Summary

- 1.1 National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services and Adoption Services, and the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 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 purpose 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. Finance

3.1 Not applicable.

4. Performance

4.1 Ofsted assesses extent to which each Statements of Purpose is an accurate reflection of the service provided.

5. Key issues

Revisions to the Statement of Purpose:

Fostering Services:

5.1 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.

- 5.2 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.
- 5.3 The Statement outlines the training that is in place for foster carer applicants to equip them with the required skills and knowledge to look after Hampshire's children.
- 5.4 The annual achievements of the service and foster carers are highlighted within the report, again promoting Hampshire's position as a successful and supportive fostering agency. There is a statement from the chair of Hampshire Fostering Network to highlight the additional support available to Hampshire foster carers.

Children's Residential Care

- 5.5 The information within the Statement of Purpose is used to identify that the home is the right home for the child and that the home will be able to respond effectively to the child's needs. Hampshire has five children's homes for local children whose needs cannot be met within a family environment. They are all mixed sex homes and range from 4-6 beds located throughout Hampshire, currently accommodating a maximum of 25 children.
 - Godbey House is located in Hayling Island. This six bedded home accommodates children and young people aged between 12-17 years.
 - Milesdown Children's Home is located in Winchester. 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 located in Basingstoke and accommodates four children and young people aged between 11-17 years.
 - The Greenhouse Children's Home temporarily located at Crossways Children's Home in Old Basing. This four bedded home accommodates children and young people aged between 12- 17 years.

- 5.6 Hampshire is in the process of implementing a Residential Strategy that will result in eight 'open' children's homes, accommodating 33 children. The Statements of Purpose will be drawn up for the new homes and submitted for approval in due course
- 5.7 Swanwick Lodge is a secure children's home. It accommodates up to 16 young people of either gender who need to be secured for their own safety under section 25 of the Children Act. 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. The home is also a national resource and a self-financing business unit.
- 5.8 The Statements of Purpose for Children's Homes have been updated to reflect changes to unit policies and procedures, staffing personnel, training and qualifications and a change of 'Responsible Individual' for Swanwick Lodge to Cathi Hadley (Head of County Services) in accordance with the line management arrangements of the home.
- 5.9 Four of the 16 beds available at Swanwick Lodge were previously provided to the Youth Justice Board (YJB) under a 'block' contract which expired on 1.4.16. Hampshire County Council did not seek an extension to the contract as the obligation to receive young people regardless of their needs and risks contravened the requirement within the Children's Homes Regulations (2015) to ensure appropriate matching and, therefore, jeopardised the home's Good Ofsted grading. Placements are now offered to the YJB on a 'spot purchase' basis and the Statement of Purpose has been updated accordingly.

Short Break Homes

- 5.10 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, with each offering 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 five 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.
- 5.11 The Statements of Purpose have been amended to include additional information about: the complaints procedure, (following an Ofsted

inspection); the arrangements for children to attend local schools, and the provision available to promote educational attainment; anti-discriminatory practice; and the use of Team Teach. In addition, the qualifications of staff has been updated and there has been a change of Registered Manager for Sunbeams.

Adoption Service

- 5.12 The Adoption Service Statement of Purpose sets out the core aims and objectives of Hampshire Adoption Service. It explains the range of services that are provided to children, prospective adopters, adoptive parents, adopted adults and birth parents and guardians through the different strands of the adoption agency.
- 5.13 The principles and standards within the Statement of Purpose apply to all agency placements.
- 5.14 The Statement of Purpose reflects the emphasis the service places on the welfare of Hampshire's children who require adoptive placements, the importance of minimising delay for children and meeting statutory timescales and the support services that are being offered to children and adoptive families post-adoption. This is a growing area in Hampshire's adoption agency.
- 5.15 There are some minor revisions to this document since it was last presented. Revisions include: the wider services offered by the Adoption Support Team; a section on the highlights of 2015-16; and the change of name of Adoption Service Manager.

6. Consultation and Equalities

- 6.1 The proposal in this report does not require consultation and equality and diversity objectives are not considered to be adversely affected by the proposal.

7. Recommendation

- 7.1 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> 5788	<u>Date</u> 23 July 2015
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 2015

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.)

Fostering Services: National Minimum Standards	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fostering-services-national-minimum-standards
Short Breaks: Statutory guidance on how to safeguard and promote the welfare of disabled children using short breaks	https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationDetail/Page1/DCSF-00183-2010
Short Breaks: Advice for Local Authorities	http://media.education.gov.uk/assets/files/pdf/s/short%20breaks%20-%20advice%20for%20local%20authorities.pdf
Children's Homes:	http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2015/541/contents/made
Adoption: National Minimum Standards	Adoption: national minimum standards - Publications - GOV.UK
Assessment and Approval of Foster Carers	https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/275764/20130522statutory_guidance_eassessment_and_approval_of_foster_carers_final.pdf
Adoption: Statutory Guidance 2013	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/adoption-statutory-guidance-2013

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?