

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

Decision Maker:	Executive Lead Member for Children's Services
Date:	9 May 2018
Title:	Statement of Purpose of the Hampshire Fostering Service Adoption Service and Residential Homes
Report From:	Director of Children's Services

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1. Recommendation(s)

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

2. Executive Summary

2.1. 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.

2.2. 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 Members, highlighting the key parts of the document that have been revised since it was last presented.

3. Contextual information

3.1. The Regulations and Guidance for Fostering Services, 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.

3.2. 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.

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

3.4. The proposals in this report are expected to support the County Council's Strategic Plan as follows:

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity.

People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives.

People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment.

People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities.

4. Finance

4.1. Not applicable

5. Performance

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

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. Revisions to the Statement of Purpose:

7.1. Fostering Services:

1.1.1. The Fostering Service uses the Statement of Purpose as a competitive positioning tool, which benchmarks local authority and independent services (see Appendix 1).

1.1.2. This is useful in recruitment terms as prospective carers can compare services more easily and our flexibility and responsiveness are highlighted to promote Hampshire's position.

1.1.3. 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.

- 1.1.4. 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. This has been updated to include new e-learning and access to Research in Practice for foster carers launched in 2017.
- 1.1.5. There is a statement from the chair of Hampshire Fostering Network (HFN) which highlights the achievements of HFN during 2017- 2018.
- 1.1.6. Finally, an update is provided on fostering recruitment and events undertaken during the year and promoting Hampshire's position as a successful fostering agency.

7.2. Children's Residential Care

- 1.1.7. 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 eight children's homes for local children whose needs cannot be met within a family environment. They are all mixed sex homes and range from 4-5 beds located throughout Hampshire, currently accommodating a maximum of 33 children.
- 1.1.8. Following feedback from Ofsted, all Statements of Purpose for the eight children's homes have been amended to provide greater clarity around emergency admissions and The Mead will be specialising in emergencies and short-term assessment and reunification placements.
 - Amani is a new home located in Dibden Purlieu. The home opened in Summer 2017 and accommodates four children and young people aged between 10-17 years. (Appendix 2)
 - Berry View is a new home located in Andover. The home opened in late summer 2017 and accommodates four children and young people aged between 10-17 years. (Appendix 3)
 - Candle Lodge is a new home in Chandlers Ford. The home opened in Summer 2017 and accommodates four children and young people aged between 10-17 years. (Appendix 4)
 - Crofton House is a new home in Havant. The home opened in Summer 2017 and accommodates four children and young people aged between 10-17 years. (Appendix 5)
 - Cypress Lodge is located in Basingstoke and accommodates four children and young people aged between 10-17 years. (Appendix 6)
 - Ferne Lodge is a new home in Fareham. The home opened in Summer 2017 and accommodates four children and young people aged between 10-17 years. (Appendix 7)

- The Mead is located in Odiham. This five bedded home accommodates children and young people aged between 10-17 years. (Appendix 8)
- Crossways in Old Basing is the temporary home for staff and children who were at Milesdown and are awaiting the completion of a new build on the Milesdown site in Winchester (Appendix 9). It is anticipated that the home will be completed in winter 2018 and a Statement of Purpose will be required prior to Ofsted registration of the home. The new Statement of Purpose will be similar to Crossways but will be altered to reflect the design of the home and the location.
- Swanwick Lodge is a secure children's home. It is a national resource with young people being placed at Swanwick Lodge from across the UK. It accommodates up to 16 young people of either gender who need to be placed in a secure setting to safeguard their welfare. Young people are normally subject to a court order which permits the restriction of their liberty. 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. Swanwick Lodge is a self-financing business unit. (Appendix 10)

1.1.9. 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 any changes to the 'Responsible Individual' and/or 'Registered Manager' in accordance with the line management arrangements of the home.

7.3. Overnight Respite Homes

1.1.10. As part of the continuum of overnight resources supporting children and young people with complex learning difficulties (including autism) and their families, Hampshire County Council has three residential homes each offering overnight respite.

1.1.11. Children with disabilities are assessed by qualified children's social workers against Hampshire County Council's eligibility criteria. The County Allocation Panel (CAP) approves individual children/young people for overnight respite, where the need for it has been clearly proven via assessment and planning.

- Firvale is located in Basingstoke, owned by Hampshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (HHFT), and jointly funded and managed by the County Council and HHFT. It is registered to accommodate up to nine children/young people. (Appendix 11)
- Merrydale is located in Kings Worthy, Winchester and is registered to accommodate up to thirteen children/young people. (Appendix 12)

- Sunbeams is situated in Aldershot and is registered to accommodate up to four children/young people overnight. (Appendix 13)
- 1.1.12. The Statements of Purpose for the overnight respite homes have been updated to reflect changes to unit policies and procedures, staffing personnel, training and qualifications and a change to the 'Responsible Individual'.
- 1.1.13. Following a public consultation the proposal to close two overnight residential respite homes for children with disabilities as the County Council moves towards a wider range of overnight respite services has been approved by the Executive Member for Children's Services. Children who access Merrydale and Sunbeams are being supported to transition to alternative overnight respite provision by the end of May 2018.

8. Adoption Service

- 8.1. The Adoption Service Statement of Purpose sets out the core aims and objectives of Hampshire's Adoption Service. (Appendix 14) It explains the range of services that are provided to children, prospective adopters, adoptive parents, adopted adults and birth parents through the different strands of the adoption agency.
- 8.2. The principles and standards within the Statement of Purpose apply to all agency placements.
- 8.3. The Statement of Purpose reflects the emphasis that the Adoption Service places on the welfare of Hampshire's children who require adoptive placements, the importance of minimising delay for children and meeting statutory timescales. In addition, the support services that are being offered to children and adoptive families post-adoption which continues to be a growing area in Hampshire's adoption agency are described.
- 8.4. There are some minor revisions to this document since it was last presented. Revisions include;
- Details of Cornerstone's Mentoring Scheme.
 - An update on the Adopter Voice Forum, as this is now provided as part of the developments of the Regional Adoption Agency.
 - The Participation Officer's details have been updated.
 - A section on the highlights of 2017-18.

9. Future direction

- 9.1. The Statements of Purpose will drive the delivery of the Adoption, Fostering and Children's Residential homes for 2018-19. As required they will be updated in one year to reflect the development of services and needs.

CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	Yes
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	Yes
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	Yes
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	Yes

Other Significant Links

Links to previous Member decisions:		
<u>Title</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Date</u>
Statement of Purpose Executive Member Report		19 June 2017
Statement of Purpose Executive Member Report	7377	25 May 2016
Statement of Purpose Executive Member Report	5788	23 July 2015
Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives		
<u>Title</u>		<u>Date</u>
Children Act		1989/2004
Care Standards Act		2000
Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations		2011
Children's Home Regulations		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.)

<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
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. Equality Duty

1.1. The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- a) The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant characteristic connected to that characteristic;
- b) Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- c) Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

1.2. Equalities Impact Assessment:

Not considered to be adversely affected.

2. Impact on Crime and Disorder:

2.1. Not considered to be adversely affected.

3. Climate Change:

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

Not considered to be adversely affected.

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

Not considered to be adversely affected.