

**Subject:** Annual Fostering Service Report  
**Date of Meeting:** 2 November 2009  
**Report of:** Director of Children's Services  
**Contact Officer:** Name: Sharon Donnelly Tel: 29-5449  
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**Key Decision:** No Forward Plan No: N/A  
**Wards Affected:** All

### FOR GENERAL RELEASE

#### 1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 Fostering regulations require that an annual fostering report be provided to be received by the Council Executive. The annual report for 2007/8 found in Appendix 1 provides full information about fostering activity within the Children & Young People's Trust and a profile of the work of the Fostering teams with the Fostering & Adoption Service.
- 1.2 Standard 1 of the National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services requires that the statement of purpose is endorsed by the Council's executive annually. The revised statement of purpose can be found in Appendix 2.

#### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the Annual Fostering Service Report and the progress of the Fostering & Adoption Service in relation to fostering activity be noted.
- 2.2 That the revised Fostering Statement of Purpose be endorsed.

#### 3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:

- 3.1 See Annual Fostering Service Report

#### 4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 The Annual Fostering Service report has been compiled in collaboration with managers from the Adoption and Fostering service and the report of the Independent Chair of Panel has been compiled in consultation with Fostering Panel members

## 5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

### Financial Implications:

- 5.1 The spending on in-house fostering allowances and other expenses during 2008/2009 totalled £3.635m. this was an increase of 4% on the spend in 2007/08. Spending on Residence Orders Allowances continued to increase, growing by 12% in 2008/09 to £1.323m. The numbers of Residence Orders being obtained has risen considerably over the past few years from 133.21 in 2005/2006 to 149.19 in the last financial year. In addition, spending on Special Guardianship amounted to £0.171m in 2008/09.

Spend on agency fostering rose by just 2% in 2008/2009 to £4.167m. There has been a large effort to control the costs of IFAs and this was reflected in the average direct cost of a standard IFA falling in 2008/09 by 2% to £864.21 per week.

The average direct unit cost for agency foster care of £864 per week compares to £418 per week for children placed with in-house carers

*Finance Officer Consulted: David Ellis*

*Date: September 2009*

### Legal Implications:

- 5.2 The legal and regulatory context of fostering services are referred to in the body of the report. These services are essential to fulfilling the statutory obligations of the Trust to otherwise vulnerable children under both the Children Act 1989 & 2004. Children can only be placed into care with the express agreement of their parents or the approval of the Court. Fostering services should reflect the right of children to a family life, which is defined in law so as to include foster carers with whom they have formed a family like attachment , as well as to their birth family.

*Lawyer Consulted: Natasha Watson*

*Date: September 2009*

### Equalities Implications:

- 5.3 There is a legal requirement for the local authority to provide foster carers who can reflect a child's religious persuasion, racial origin and cultural and linguistic background. BHCC actively encourages foster carer applications from citizens from a wide range of backgrounds and has an explicitly inclusive recruitment strategy. An Equalities impact assessment is due to be undertaken in 2009/10.

### Sustainability Implications:

- 5.4 None have been identified.

### Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.5 None have been identified.

### Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.6 None have been identified.

### Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 5.7 The annual report focuses on the work of the Fostering service which is a citywide service within the CYPT.

**6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):**

6.1 None

**7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS**

7.1 It is a requirement of Fostering Regulations and the National Fostering Minimum standards.

**SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

**Appendices:**

1. Annual Fostering Service Report
2. Fostering Service Statement of Purpose

**Documents In Members' Rooms**

1. Annual Fostering Service Report
2. Fostering Service Statement of Purpose

**Background Documents**

1. Annual Adoption Agency Report 2008/9

