

TO: EXECUTIVE MEMBER OF CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND LEARNING

DATE: 8TH SEPTEMBER 2020

**APPROVAL OF THE PRIVATE FOSTERING SERVICE STATEMENT OF PURPOSE
2020 – 2021 AND PRIVATE FOSTERING SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT 2019 - 2020
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: PEOPLE**

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the decision is to approve the Statement of Purpose for Private Fostering Services for 2020 – 2021 and Private Fostering Service Annual Report 2019 – 2020.

2 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 Whilst there have been updates to the Statement of Purpose there are no significant changes from the previous year and it can be delivered within existing resources.

3 RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 **That the Statement of Purpose for Private Fostering Services 2020 - 2021 [annex 1] and Private Fostering Annual Report 2019 – 2020 [annex 2] are APPROVED.**

4 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 4.1 The compilation and annual review of the Statement of Purpose for the Private Fostering Service is a requirement under the National Minimum Standards for Private Fostering, July 2005, Standard 1.

5 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 None. It is a requirement of the Minimum Standards that the local authority has a written Statement of Purpose in place for Private Fostering Services.

6 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 6.1 The Statement sets out the Council's key duties in relation to private fostering and how these will be met. These duties include:
- Raising awareness of the legal requirement for private foster carers to notify the Council.
 - Provide a summary of work undertaken by Bracknell Forest in this area.
 - Providing training and support for staff.
 - Ensuring that there are sound arrangements for the assessment of private foster carers and privately fostered children.
 - Providing support and advice to private foster carers and to privately fostered children and their parents.
 - To provide an annual report to the LSCB.
- 6.2 Comprehensive information regarding all regulations governing private fostering arrangements is contained in the Bracknell Forest Private Fostering Policy, 2014

which details all the actions required under the Children Act Regulations 2005 and includes full details of the legislative requirements, together with comprehensive practice guidance for social workers dealing with the notification and supervision of private fostering arrangements. It also sets out the actions required to ensure that these children are properly safeguarded with regard to the child protection matters, standards of care and welfare concerns.

6.3 Allowances are not paid to private foster carers.

6.4 Sufficient funds exist for the delivery of the Statement of Purpose.

7 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

7.1 The legal issues are addressed within the report and the attached background papers.

Director of Finance

7.2 The Director of Finance is satisfied that no significant financial implications arise from this report.

Equalities Impact Assessment

7.3 There is an Equality Impact Assessment

Strategic Risk Management Issues

7.4 The strategic risk identified is that if the service does not complete an annual review of the Statement of Purpose the Council will be in breach of the National Minimum Standards. There are no changes completed or proposed in the content of the service that will constitute a strategic risk.

Other Officers

7.5 The Children's Social Care Leadership Team considered and endorsed the Statement of Purpose and Annual Report in July 2020.

8 CONSULTATION

Principal Groups Consulted

8.1

Method of Consultation

8.2

Representations Received

8.3

Background Papers

The Statement of Purpose for Private Fostering Services 2020 – 21 **[annex 1]**.

Private Fostering Annual Report 2019 – 2020 **[annex 2]**.

See also: Bracknell Forest Policy, Procedure and Practice Guidance for Private Fostering, 2018, at

<https://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/private-fostering-policy-procedure-guidance.pdf>

National Minimum Standards for Private Fostering, at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-act-1989-private-fostering>

Contact for further information

Peter Hodges

Head of Service, Life Chances

Children's Social Care

Peter.Hodges@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

01344-351532