

**Chief Officer Confirmation of Report Submission
Cabinet Member Confirmation of Briefing**

Report for: Mayor

Mayor and Cabinet

Mayor and Cabinet (Contracts)

Executive Director

Information

Part 1

Part 2

Key Decision

Date of Meeting	11 th April 2011
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Title of Report	Fostering Statement of Purpose 2012-2013 and Children's Guide - My Guide to Foster Care
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Originator of Report	Brendah Malahleka	Ext. 48730
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At the time of submission for the Agenda, I confirm that the report has:

Category	Yes	No
Financial Comments from Exec Director for Resources	√	
Legal Comments from the Head of Law	√	
Crime & Disorder Implications		√
Environmental Implications		√
Equality Implications/Impact Assessment (as appropriate)		√
Confirmed Adherence to Budget & Policy Framework		√
Risk Assessment Comments (as appropriate)		√
Reason for Urgency (as appropriate)		

Signed: *Helen Khin* Executive Member

Date: 29th March 2012

Signed: *Ante Sile* Executive Director

Date: 29th March 2012

Control Record by Committee Support

Action	Date
Listed on Schedule of Business/Forward Plan (if appropriate)	
Draft Report Cleared at Agenda Planning Meeting (not delegated decisions)	
Submitted Report from CO Received by Committee Support	
Scheduled Date for Call-in (if appropriate)	
To be Referred to Full Council	

MAYOR AND CABINET

Report Title	Fostering Statement of Purpose 2012-2013 and Children's Guide - My Guide to Foster Care	
Key decision	Yes	Item No.
Ward	All	
Contributors	Executive Director for Children and Young People	
Class	Open	Date: 11 April 2012

1. Summary of the Report

This report presents to the Mayor and Cabinet the Lewisham Fostering Statement of Purpose for 2012 – 2013 and the Children's Guide – My Guide to Foster Care for approval as required by the Fostering Regulations 2011. The Lewisham Fostering Statement of Purpose and the Children's Guide are reviewed on an annual basis, in line with Statutory requirements. The Fostering Statement of Purpose focuses on the desired outcomes for Looked After Children in line with the Every Child Matters 5 objectives. This Statement of Purpose incorporates comments made by the Inspector during the OfSTED Pilot Inspection in November 2011.

2. Purpose and Structure of the Report

The purpose of this report is to present for approval the revised Lewisham Fostering Statement of Purpose for 2012-2013 and Children's Guide – My Guide to Foster Care.

3. Recommendation

That the Mayor approves the Statement of Purpose for the Fostering Service for 2012-2013 and Children's Guide – My Guide to Foster Care.

4. Policy Context

- 4.1** The Fostering Services Regulations 2011 and National Minimum Standards 2011 require all Fostering Services to provide and review annually a written Statement of Purpose setting out the aims and objectives of the service and facilities provided.
- 4.2** The Fostering Services Regulations and National Minimum Standards 2011 require Fostering Services to produce and regularly review a Children's Guide.
- 4.3** The Lewisham Fostering Service Statement of Purpose reflects the Council's corporate priorities and contributes particularly to: Community leadership and empowerment, young people's achievement and involvement, safety, security and a visible presence, protection of children and active, healthy citizens.
- 4.4** The Statement of Purpose also contributes to five of the key priority outcomes of Lewisham's Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2020:
- **Ambitious and achieving** – where people are inspired and supported to fulfil their potential
 - **Safer** – where people feel safe and live free from crime, antisocial behaviour and abuse

- **Empowered and responsible** – where people are actively involved in their local area and contribute to supportive communities
- **Healthy, active and enjoyable** – where people can actively participate in maintaining and improving their health and well-being
- **Dynamic and prosperous** – where people are part of vibrant communities and town centres, well connected to London and beyond.

5. Narrative

- 5.1 The Fostering Service primarily provides a service for Looked After Children. The service is committed to identifying and supporting stable placements for children where foster care is the identified plan.
- 5.2 Currently, the Fostering Service has 104 Lewisham foster carers with approximately 170 Looked After Children in placement.
- 5.3 The Fostering Service is required through Fostering Regulations and National Minimum Standards 2011 to undertake appropriate recruitment of Foster Carers and provide training, support and development for foster carers.
- 5.4 Fostering Regulations and National Minimum Standards 2011 require that Supervising Social Workers from the Fostering Service provide advice and support to foster carers and work in partnership with the Looked After Child's Social Worker to deliver the best possible outcomes for the child in placement.
- 5.5 The Lewisham Fostering Panel exercises the roles and functions according to the Fostering Services Regulations and National Minimum Standards, 2011. The Fostering Panel is chaired by an independent person i.e. a social worker not employed by Lewisham Council. The vice-chair can be similarly an independent social worker or other independent member of the Fostering Panel.
- 5.6 The Fostering Panel Adviser holds a key role and this is fulfilled by the Team Manager, Fostering Support & Development.
- 5.7 The Statutory Agency Decision Maker, is the Director of Children's Social Care who consults the Service Manager, Fostering Panel Chair and the Fostering Panel Professional Adviser as and when necessary.
- 5.8 In line with national good practice, foster carer annual reviews are presented for overview and scrutiny by the Fostering Panel.
- 5.9 The Lewisham Fostering Panel meets monthly on dates agreed in advance. There is the flexibility to call meetings over and above the pre-arranged dates by agreement with the Fostering Panel Members.
- 5.10 The Lewisham Statement of Purpose was last updated in March 2011. The key Ofsted Inspection Standards derive from the Children Act 2004 Every Child Matters Objectives and are the focus for achieving desired outcomes for LAC and these are as follows:
- Being Healthy
 - Staying Safe
 - Enjoying and Achieving
 - Making a Positive Contribution
 - Achieve Economic Wellbeing.

These objectives are addressed in full in the Statement of Purpose. This latest version of The Statement of Purpose incorporates the comments received from the inspector during the Ofsted Inspection in November 2011.

6. Background

Not applicable.

7. Financial implications

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

8. Legal Implications

Local Authorities exercise Social Services functions as required by the Local Authority Social Services Act 1970. Local Authorities have a statutory responsibility to provide appropriate services for children whom they look after.

9. Equalities Implications

The work of the Fostering Service contributes to the achievement of the Council's priority relating to the 'protection of children.' Equality & Diversity has been incorporated into the Statement of Purpose and is updated as part of the regular review of the Statement of Purpose.

10. Environmental Implications

There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

11. Conclusion

The Statement of Purpose and Children's Guide – My Guide to Foster Care inform children, young people, Lewisham foster carers and prospective carers of what they can expect from the Lewisham Fostering Service. This supplements the Foster Carer Handbook, which gives more detail of expectations, policies and procedures governing the direct care of Looked After Children.

These two documents ensure that children, their parents, foster carers, staff are clear about the aims and objectives of the Fostering Service and what services and facilities it provides. The Fostering Service is required to meet the aims and objectives in the Statement of Purpose.

The Lewisham Statement of Purpose and Children's Guide are reviewed and updated annually.

12. Background Papers

None.

If there are any queries on this report, please contact Brendah Malahleka on 020 8314 8730.

Appendix 1

Fostering Statement of Purpose

Appendix 2

Children's Guides – My Guide to Foster Care