

TITLE OF REPORT: Annual Fostering and Adoption Services Reports 2017-18

REPORT OF: Caroline O'Neill, Strategic Director, Care, Wellbeing and Learning

Purpose of the Report

1. This report seeks Cabinet approval of the fostering and adoption annual reports.

Background

2. The annual reports illustrate the considerable level of activity across both the Fostering and Adoption services in Gateshead, and to fulfil the requirement for the Council to approve and publish a range of statutory annual reports.

Proposal

3. The annual reports provide information on the activities of the Fostering and Adoption Service for 2017/18. A summary of key issues are outlined below.

4. **Fostering Service Annual Report**

This is the Annual Report for Gateshead Council's Fostering Service covering the following areas for the period 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018:

- Structure of the Fostering Service
- Payment for Skills
- Current foster carer population within Gateshead Council
- Referrals for fostering placements
- The use of Independent Fostering Agencies
- Recruitment and retention of foster carers
- Business undertaken by the Fostering Panel
- Service development

5. The report highlights the activities and work undertaken within the Service within this period.

6. **Adoption Annual Report**

The Adoption Service Annual Report 2017/2018 outlines the performance of the service during this period, detailing numbers of children adopted and adopters assessed and approved. The report also includes comments from users of the service in relation to the performance of the Service and evidences that the service continues to perform well in relation to key areas such as adoption support, recruitment of adopters for children requiring adoption and the secure placement of children with their new families, with very low levels of disruption. Recruitment of suitable adopters to meet the complex needs of waiting children will remain a priority

as will the continuing provision and development of post adoption support. Ongoing reform including the regionalization of adoption services remains a central Government priority and the service will continue to adapt to meet evolving demands.

Recommendations

7. It is recommended that Cabinet endorses the Annual Fostering and Adoption Services reports for 2017/18.

For the following reasons:

- (i) To ensure that the needs of children, young people and families continue to be met.
- (ii) To ensure most effective use of resources and alignment of programmes.
- (iii) To ensure the Council fulfils its statutory duties.

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APPENDIX 1

Policy Context

1. The annual reports reflect the former Council Plan and Children Gateshead, the plan for children, young people and families in Gateshead.
2. The key priorities for 18/19 will support the Thrive agenda.

Background

3. There is a statutory duty to publish annual reports of the activities of the fostering and adoption services. All such reports are presented here for approval.

Consultation

4. The Cabinet Members for Children and Young People have been consulted.

Alternative Options

5. The Council must produce annual reports for fostering and adoption, therefore there are no alternatives to these reports being presented

Implications of Recommended Option

6. **Resources:**
 - a) **Financial Implications** – The Strategic Director, Corporate Resources confirms that there are no financial implications as a result of this report
 - b) **Human Resources Implications** – There are no specific implications arising from this report.
 - c) **Property Implications** - There are no specific implications arising from this report.
7. **Risk Management Implication** - There are no specific implications arising from this report.
8. **Equality and Diversity Implications** - No implications
9. **Crime and Disorder Implications** – No implications
10. **Health Implications** – No implications
11. **Sustainability Implications** - No implications
12. **Human Rights Implications** - No implications
13. **Area and Ward Implications** - No specific implications