

9 December 2013

Agenda Item: 5

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE

**COMMISSIONING OF PLACEMENTS AND RESPONSIBILITY FOR
CHILDREN FROM OTHER LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN CHILDREN'S HOMES IN
NOTTINGHAMSHIRE.**

Purpose of the Report

1. To give a brief overview of the process of commissioning children's placements and the responsibilities of the Local Authority towards children from other local authorities placed in Nottinghamshire Children's Homes and seek approval to review the arrangements annually.

Information and Advice

2. Children's placements are commissioned via two contracts: Fostering Placements are commissioned via the East Midlands Consortium agreement and Residential Placements are commissioned via the Nottinghamshire Approved Provider List. Nottinghamshire's current 894 Looked After Children are placed as follows:

Placement	No of LAC	% of total
Nottinghamshire	521	58.3%
Placed for adoption	92	10.3%
Nottingham City	64	7.2%
Derbyshire	83	9.3%
Lincolnshire	44	4.9%
Rotherham	18	2.0%
Doncaster	17	1.9%
Leicestershire	9	1.0%
Staffordshire	5	0.6%
Gloucester	5	0.6%
Chiltern	3	0.3%
Coventry	3	0.3%
Cumbria	3	0.3%
Rugby	3	0.3%
Sheffield	3	0.3%
Barnsley	2	0.2%

Northamptonshire	2	0.2%
Wetherby	2	0.2%
Birmingham	1	0.1%
Corby	1	0.1%
Harrogate	1	0.1%
Hounslow	1	0.1%
Hull	1	0.1%
Hyde	1	0.1%
Lichfield	1	0.1%
Liverpool	1	0.1%
Luton	1	0.1%
Nuneaton	1	0.1%
Rutland	1	0.1%
Selby	1	0.1%
Shrewsbury	1	0.1%
Southwark	1	0.1%
Wakefield	1	0.1%
Total	894	

Type of Placement:

Internal foster Care	320
IFA	269
Fostering Parents or family	90
Adoption	92
Internal Residential	16
External Residential	64
Semi-independent	37
Secure Remand	5
Secure Welfare	1
Total	894

3. The majority of children and young people are resident in Nottinghamshire, with the highest proportion of out of county placements being made in Nottingham City, Derbyshire and then in neighbouring East Midlands Authorities. Children and young people are placed in more remote locations where they have specialist needs which cannot be met within the County (e.g. the 3 young people placed in Cumbria).
4. Residential Placements are monitored in four ways. Firstly, by the child or young person's social worker who places the child and young person and makes statutory visits to ensure their safety; secondly, by Ofsted who are responsible for registering providers; thirdly, via Regulation 33 visits which are arranged by organisations as internal monitoring provision; and finally by Local Authority monitoring visits undertaken by the Placements and Commissioning Team who visit residential units to ensure that services for young people are being delivered as commissioned. In addition to this the East Midlands

Consortium also undertakes monitoring visits and shares their feedback with us.

5. Nottinghamshire County Council has a central notifications e-mail address managed by the Placements Team which manages information regarding placement of young people from other authorities into Nottinghamshire, records this information on Framework and alerts contacts in health and education.
6. At present Nottinghamshire has no responsibility to monitor the welfare of children and young people placed within the County in homes managed by external providers. It appears that this is likely to change as the Government reviews this legislation. Looked After Children from other authorities will be referred into the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) or Missing Children systems in the same way as any other young person living in the County but the responsibility for their care remains with the placing authority.

Other Options Considered

7. The placements of children and young people outside of the Local Authority's provision remains under constant review with the Local Authority working towards recruiting more internal foster carers and endeavouring to increase local provision.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

8. To ensure that these arrangements are reviewed on an annual basis.

Statutory and Policy Implications

9. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, the public sector equality duty, human resources, crime and disorder, human rights, the safeguarding of children, sustainability and the environment and those using the service and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Implications for Service Users

10. The Local Authority remains committed to placing children and young people as far as is possible within the County and to ensuring that all young people placed externally are monitored and visited in accordance with legislation and guidance.

Financial Implications

11. The Local Authority will continue to remain in a position where the majority of children and young people are placed with internal foster carers as this is both best social work practice and economic practice.

Safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable Adults Implications

12. Children and young people's safety remains the responsibility of their allocated social worker with additional responsibility being taken by Ofsted in respect of the regulation and monitoring of children's homes and by the organisations which manage the homes.

RECOMMENDATION/S

That:

- 1) to note the report and that Nottinghamshire County Council continues to place children and young people within the County of Nottinghamshire as far as is possible
- 2) the arrangements for commissioning children's placements are reviewed annually.

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Constitutional Comments (SLB 14/11/13)

13. Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee is the appropriate body to consider the content of this report.

Financial Comments (KLA 14/11/13)

14. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

Background Papers and Published Documents

None.

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.

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