



## **REPORT OF THE SERVICE MANAGER, FOSTERING**

### **FOSTERING SERVICE: OFSTED INSPECTION AND BUSINESS ACTIVITY**

#### **Purpose of the Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to inform the Corporate Parenting Panel:
  - a) of the outcome of the Ofsted Inspection of the Fostering Service
  - b) of the outcome of the authority's additional investment in fee paid foster carers (2011/12).

#### **Information and Advice**

2. The Fostering Service was inspected by Ofsted in October 2011. The service received an overall quality rating of good. On previous inspection in 2008, the service had received an overall quality rating of satisfactory. The inspectors noted, in October 2011, that all the recommendations made at the inspection in 2008 had been met.
3. The Ofsted inspectors made the following comments in their report: *"the fostering service helps achieve good outcomes for children and young people in foster care.....a key strength ...is the level of support and resources available to disabled children and young people...the authority works effectively with partner agencies...another key strength is the money that has been invested in short break care provided by contract carers.....children and young people are enjoying sound, strong relationships with their fostering household....foster carers are caring, committed and professional in their role. They help build the foundations for children and young people to develop secure and safe attachments... the organisation and management of the foster service are effective and efficient...foster carers are being well supported...."* (The full report is available online at [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).
4. To improve the quality and standards of foster care, the Ofsted Inspectors made two recommendations. The inspectors commented that "neither of these areas negatively impact on the continued good outcomes that children and young people are achieving." The response of the service, and its associated action plan, is attached (**Appendix A**).
5. The Fostering Service received an additional investment of £380,000, in April 2011, to increase the number of foster placements with fee paid foster carers. Fee paid foster carers, like all foster carers, are self employed but these fee paid foster carers receive a weekly fee commensurate to an annual income of £24,000-28,000. The success of the fostering service in increasing the number of fee paid foster carers is detailed in **Appendix B**.

## **Other Options Considered**

6. This report is an information only report.

## **Statutory and Policy Implications**

7. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, equal opportunities, 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.

## **RECOMMENDATION/S**

That the Panel notes:

- 1) the outcome of the Ofsted Inspection and the Fostering Service's action plan
- 2) the positive foster carer recruitment activity within the Fostering Service.

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## **Constitutional Comments**

8. As this report is for noting only, no Constitutional Comments are required.

## **Financial Comments (NDR 29/03/12)**

9. The additional investment of £380,000 in 2011/12 is noted in paragraph 5 of the report.

## **Background Papers**

Ofsted report 'Nottinghamshire County Council Fostering Service' (published on 19 November 2012).

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

## **Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

All.  
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