



# Corporate Parenting Board

## 23 October 2014

<b>Report title</b>	Wolverhampton Fostering Annual Report From April 2013 to March 2014	
<b>Cabinet member with lead responsibility</b>	Councillor Val Gibson Children and Families	
<b>Wards affected</b>	All	
<b>Accountable director</b>	Sarah Norman, Community	
<b>Originating service</b>	Community, Children, Young People and Families / Looked After Children	
<b>Accountable employee(s)</b>	Daphne Atkinson Tel Email	Senior Consultant Social Worker 01902 553070 daphne.atkinson@wolverhampton.gov.uk

### Recommendations for noting:

The Corporate Parenting Board is asked to note and receive the Fostering Annual Report for 2013/2014.

## **1.0 Purpose**

To enable the Corporate Parenting Panel to have a clear understanding of the work undertaken by the Fostering Service

## **2.0 Background**

2.1 The Fostering Service annual report, which is attached, highlights the work of the Fostering Service for the period April 2013 to March 2014. Under the Fostering Service Regulations 2011, the Fostering Service must provide the executive side of the Council with written activities of the Fostering Service.

## **3.0 Progress, options, discussion, etc.**

3.1 Staff and foster carers highly value the Fostering Service and are well motivated and committed to providing good quality care to children and young people. Staff work well together and network closely with other professionals and agencies to provide therapeutic, educational and health support to children. Foster carers, family and friend carers, permanent, respite all demonstrate a strong commitment to children and young people and their role as foster carers. Young people tell us that they feel safe and well cared for in foster placements.

3.2 The report shows improvements in the recruitment (since its return to Wolverhampton from Five Rivers ) of foster carers through targeted marketing activity. Whilst there has been a significant increase in the number of enquiries, the conversion rate has remained low. Of most significance is the total figure for mainstream carers, with an increase in approvals (23 compared with 8 previous years ). The service is striving to meet targets to increase the number of local foster placements for Wolverhampton children, which will help to reduce the reliance on expensive Independent Fostering Agency (IFA) placements. There are 200 fostering households offering 366 placements. Of the 783 children in care in Wolverhampton in March 2014, 215 children were placed in internal foster placements, including family and friend placements.

3.3 The Fostering Service is helped in supporting carers and children through partnerships with The Education Service and Health. The Fostering Service commissions the services of an independent organisation to provide support to carers through training, workshops, support groups and individual work with carers. Within Children's Services, there are effective working relationships between the Looked After Children's Teams, and Locality teams.

## **4.0 Financial implications**

4.1 The approved budget for 2013/2014 for the Fostering Service was £4.5 million.

4.2 There are no direct financial implications arising as a result of this report.

[NM/14102014/R]

## **5.0 Legal implications**

5.1 Under the Fostering Service Regulations 2011, which came into effect on 1 April 2011, the Fostering Service must provide the executive side of the Council with written reports on the activities of the Fostering Service. [TC/15102014/D]

## **6.0 Equalities implications**

6.1 We want to have continuous improvements in securing local foster placements, placements for children from all backgrounds including those of ethnic minority communities, and disabled children and their families, to ensure equality of access to services for all Wolverhampton children who are Looked After by the local authority.

## **7.0 Environmental implications**

7.1 There are no identified environmental implications.

## **8.0 Human resources implications**

8.1 There are no known Human resources implications

## **9.0 Corporate landlord implications**

9.1 There are no known Corporate landlord implications.

## **10.0 Schedule of background papers**

10.1 There are no other reports or documents that are relevant to this subject matter