

**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
MUNICIPAL YEAR 2014/15**

**COMMUNITY AND CHILDREN'S
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

8TH OCTOBER 2014

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF
COMMUNITY & CHILDREN'S
SERVICES**

Agenda Item No: 6

Fostering Service Action Plan

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1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The purpose of this report is to give Members sight of the action plan compiled to address the recommendations made in the report by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales during their Inspection of Rhondda Cynon Taf Fostering Services on the 19th – 21st February 2014.

2. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Members note the contents of this report.

3. BACKGROUND

RCT Fostering Services are inspected on an annual basis as required by the Fostering Services (Wales) Regulations 2003. The inspection focuses on the following key areas:

- Quality of life
- Quality of staffing
- Quality of Leadership and Management
- Quality of Foster Carers

4. SUMMARY OF INSPECTION

4.1 The Fostering Inspection identified the following positive areas of practice within the fostering service:

- Children receive good quality care with positive outcomes
- Children's educational needs are being met.

- Children's physical and emotional well being is being promoted by RCT foster carers
- Improved links between fostering service and family link service, including improvement of matching for short breaks placements.
- Staff are competent, experienced and knowledgeable
- Managers are suitably experienced and qualified.
- Fostering panel is effective and panel members receive appropriate training
- The fostering service carries out a substantial number of kinship assessments; these have increased since the last inspection.

4.2 The following areas were identified as needing improvement:

- The service is not compliant with Regulation 21 (4)(a). This relates to the fostering service provider not having an appraisal system in place.
- The service is not compliant with Regulation 29. This relates to review of approvals of foster carers, particularly kinship foster carers. A small number of reviews were out of timescales.
- Regulation 17. This relates to the support of foster carers. People cannot be confident that foster carers are well supported.
- Review the processes in placed for termination of approval of foster carers as part of the quality of care review.

5. **CURRENT SITUATION/CONCLUSION**

To ensure the recommendations of the inspection report were actioned, a Fostering Services Action Plan was produced (see attached). The Action Plan will be monitored on a monthly bases by the LAC Action Planning Group, Chaired by the Service Director for Children Services.

Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales Inspection RCT Fostering Services 19-21st February**ACTION PLAN**

Recommendation 1: The service is not compliant with Regulation 21(4) (a). This relates to the fostering service provider not having an appraisal system in place.				
ACTION	TIMESCALE	RESPONSIBLE LEAD	PROGRESS	STATUS
To implement the Cooperate Appraisal Scheme within the Fostering Service.	March 2015	AB	<p>Meeting arranged with HR re Cooperate appraisal system.</p> <p>Draft performance system developed for social worker, senior practitioner and Team Manager.</p> <p>Appraisal/Performance system implemented plan for Fostering to be developed.</p> <p>Appraisal/Performance system implemented fully in line with Corporate HR timescales for role out.</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Draft Appraisal/Performance system developed August 2014- and being implemented in liaison with Corporate HR Colleagues</p>

Recommendation 2: The service is not compliant with Regulation 29. This relates to the review of approvals of foster carers, particularly kinship foster carers. A small number of reviews were not within timescales.				
Restructure the Fostering Service so that main stream and kinship foster carers can be provided with appropriate level of supports	Jan 2014	AB	Produce a Business Plan for restructuring the Fostering Service with finance and HR for agreement in CMT and GMT Meet with staff and unions to consult on the restructuring. Set up a task and finish group with staff to implement the restructuring.	Completed Completed Task group set up and implementation ongoing.
Develop a Kinship Strategy that needs to consider the specific supports needs of kinship carers.	April 2015	JC	Draft Kinship Strategy out for consultation with staff and partners. Final Kinship Strategy to be agreed And work to be undertaken on the costs of implementing a Kinship Strategy within RCT.	Presently with partners to obtain their views
Recommendation 3: Regulation 17. This relates to the support of foster carers. People cannot be confident that foster carers are well supported.				
ACTION	TIMESCALE	RESPONSIBLE LEAD	PROGRESS	STATUS
See above- will be included in the Restructuring of the Fostering service.	Jan 2014	AB	As above	

Recommendation 4: Review the processes in place for the termination of approval of foster carers as part of the quality of care review.				
ACTION	TIMESCALE	RESPONSIBLE LEAD	PROGRESS	STATUS
Review the system/process used to terminate Foster Carers.	Jan 2014	AH	<p>Set up a task and finish group to look at the present way Foster Carers are terminated and develop a system that takes into account lessons learn on previous terminations.</p> <p>Consult on the new system, including consulting with Foster Carers and the Fostering Panel.</p> <p>Implement the new system, including a quality assurance and tracking system that also monitors panel request to review some Foster Carers in 6 months.</p>	This action is being addressed as part of the implementation of the Restructuring of the Fostering service. .