

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1. MEETING:	Self-Regulation Select Commission
2. DATE:	27 June 2013
3. TITLE:	Invest To Save Update
4. DIRECTORATE:	Safeguarding, Children and Young People's Services All Wards

5. SUMMARY

At its meeting of 2 May, 2013, the Self-Regulation Select Commission requested that a report be submitted to a future meeting on the progress and impact of the Invest to Save Bid to reduce use of independent foster agency placements. This report details actions taken, number of foster carers recruited and savings. The report was submitted to the Corporate Parenting Panel, Chaired by Cllr Lakin on May 21, 2013.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Self-Regulation Select Commission:

- a. Receives the report and notes the actions taken through the invest to save bid to recruit foster carers and prospective adopters;**
- b. Notes that the invest to save programme will continue to be monitored by officers on a monthly basis and by the Corporate Parenting Panel to ensure that targets are achieved and more fostering and adoptive placements are available locally**

7. PROPOSAL AND DETAIL

7.1 The Invest to Save Proposal was agreed in August 2011 and is a three year investment. This invest to save is focused on increasing the number of fostering and adoptive placements. The first year target of a net increase of 12 fostering households was achieved and the second year target of 18 was exceeded by 2. The final year target is a net increase of 23 fostering households. These are minimum targets.

In terms of adoption the first year target of approving 17 was exceeded by one, whilst in the second year they missed the target of 21 approvals by 2 due to checks and references being delayed. However these two will be approved in April / May. The adoption service within the third year needs to approve 21 adopters.

The approval activity needs to be balanced against the focus on ensuring retention of foster carers (see table below). Year two has seen consistent recruitment activity with foster carers and a significant improvement in activity from the previous year.

Approvals by Month	Approval category	by	Deregistration / registration by month	Reasons
April - 3	1 Families Together 1 Task 4-10 years 1 Respite 5-11 years		April 2	2 Family and Friend carers who secured SGO
May - 1	1 Task 0-5 years		May 1	Gained employment / level of dissatisfaction
June - 2	1 Task 0-2 years 1 Task 4-10 year		June 1	Family illness
July - 3	1 Families together / task 1 Family and Friend Carer 1 Task 2-6 years		July 1	Moving from area
Aug - 3	1 Task 0-1 year 1 Task 0-5 years 1 Task 12-18 years		Aug - 0	
Sept - 3	1 Task 0-5 years 1 Task 0-11 years 1 Families together / long term		Sept - 3	2 x Family and Friends carers – child reached 18 1 Emigrating
Oct - 5	1 Task 0-2 1 Task 5-11 1 Task 5-10 1 Long Term 9-18 1 Task 10-18		Oct - 3	1 carers secured SGO 1 ill health 1 change of career
Nov - 0			Nov - 0	
Dec - 0			Dec - 0	
Jan - 3	1 Task 5-11 1 Task 0 -2 1 Family and Friends Carers		Jan - 1	Family and Friends carer secured SGO

Feb - 5	1 Task 0-4 1 Task 2-5 1 Task 5-10 1 Task 5-11 1 Task 0-2	Feb - 1	1 Family and Friends – change of personal circumstances
March - 6	3 Task 5-10 2 Task 0-5 1 Task 0-2	March - 1	1 dissatisfaction
Total Approved	34	Total Lost	14

7.2 The bi monthly information sessions and press / radio are proving to be successful in respect of fostering as each session is generating appropriate enquiries. This approach is not as successful in respect of attracting prospective adoptive parents. The marketing officer is part of the Yorkshire and Humberside Consortium recruitment group which allows the service to learn from others and adapt our own recruitment strategies. The marketing activity during 2012/13 has been evaluated and plans for 2013/14 drawn up. As a result of the evaluation and a piece of research undertaken to explore what motivates individuals to adopt, the plan during 2013/14 will be to run separate and discrete marketing activity for adoption and fostering.

7.3 Additional work -extensions to existing foster carers homes

An element of the recruitment and retention strategy was to see whether increased capacity within existing foster carer households or improved quality of life for looked after children could be achieved by building extensions on existing foster carers homes.

24 foster carers plus two family and friends households (total 26) were identified for this investment as a benefit to the looked after children and the service.

- 5 have been completed
- 3 have been cancelled (foster carers circumstances changing or building work not feasible)
- 4 currently have builders on site
- 4 currently waiting planning
- 3 currently out to tender
- 7 surveying stage / further investigations

It is anticipated that all will be completed within 2013/14. The spend in 2011/ 12 was £91,260 and in 2012/13 was £170,170. Therefore the total amount borrowed to date is £261,430.

8. FINANCE

8.1 The invest to save programme continues to be monitored on a monthly basis to ensure that targets are achieved and more fostering and adoptive placements are available locally. Details of this are provided to each meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel.

8.2 The financial position as detailed below reflects the staged approach of the invest to save with more foster carers being recruited during years two and three. Therefore the savings will become more apparent during this financial year.

Period	Original Cumulative Cost £	Original Cumulative Saving £	Net Saving Cumulative £	Forecast Cumulative Cost £	Forecast Cumulative Saving £	Net Cumulative Saving £
July – Sept 11	46,919	5,084	-41,835	33,401	0	-33,401
Oct – Dec 11	153,369	17,793	-135,576	139,082	5,084	-133,998
Jan – Mar 12	272,110	119,129	-152,981	244,432	120,710	-123,723
April – Jun 12	396,156	264,638	-131,518	347,269	143,587	-203,683
July – Sept 12	519,415	443,700	-75,715	454,744	242,594	-212,150
Oct – Dec 12	638,236	654,028	15,792	558,326	370,262	-188,064
Jan – Mar 13	761,095	903,438	142,343	671,610	745,196	73,586
Apr – Jun 13	878,641	1,191,930	313,289	784,854	930,184	145,330
July – Sept 13	997,025	1,526,343	529,318	900,598	1,294,267	393,669
Oct – Dec 13	1,124,321	1,908,827	784,506	1,020,928	1,687,728	666,800
Jan – Mar 14	1,263,555	2,339,381	1,075,826	1,149,172	2,156,259	1,007,087

9. RISK AND UNCERTAINTIES

The risk is continued over reliance on Independent Fostering and Adoption Agencies if the targets are not achieved and lack of placement choice for those children and young people who become Looked After

10. POLICY AND PERFORMANCE AGENDA IMPLICATIONS

Performance measures have been identified for the service and these will be monitored on an ongoing basis.

11. BACKGROUND AND CONSULTATION

This was brought at the request of Self-Regulation Select Commission

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