

Public Document Pack



EXECUTIVE DECISION DAY NOTICE

Executive Lead Member for Children's Services Decision Day

Date and Time Tuesday 17th May 2022 at 2.00pm

Place Remote Decision Day

Enquiries to members.services@hants.gov.uk

Carolyn Williamson FCPFA
Chief Executive
The Castle, Winchester SO23 8UJ

FILMING AND BROADCAST NOTIFICATION

This decision day is being held remotely and will be recorded and broadcast live via the County Council's website.

AGENDA

DEPUTATIONS

To receive any deputations notified under Standing Order 12.

KEY DECISIONS (NON-EXEMPT/NON-CONFIDENTIAL)

- 1. DWP HOUSEHOLD SUPPORT FUND APRIL - SEPTEMBER 2022**
(Pages 3 - 14)

To consider a report of the Director of Children's Services regarding the Department for Work and Pensions Household Support Fund for April to September 2022.

NON KEY DECISIONS (NON-EXEMPT/NON-CONFIDENTIAL)

- 2. WYVERN COLLEGE, FAIR OAK** (Pages 15 - 36)

To consider a report from the Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services seeking spending approval in relation to the project proposals for Wyvern College.

- 3. STATEMENTS OF PURPOSE FOR HAMPSHIRE'S CHILDREN'S HOMES, FOSTERING, AND ADOPTION SERVICES** (Pages 37 - 78)

To consider a report of the Director of Children's Services regarding the Statements of Purpose for the Hampshire Fostering and Adoption services and for Residential Homes.

Exclusion of the Press and Public

RECOMMENDATION:

That the public be excluded from the meeting during the following item of business, as it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present during this item there would be disclosure to them of exempt information within Paragraphs 1 and 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, and further that in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, for the reasons set out in the report.

KEY DECISIONS (EXEMPT/CONFIDENTIAL)

Not Applicable.

NON KEY DECISIONS (EXEMPT/CONFIDENTIAL)

4. STATEMENTS OF PURPOSE FOR HAMPSHIRE'S CHILDREN'S HOMES, FOSTERING, AND ADOPTION SERVICES (EXEMPT APPENDICES) (Pages 79 - 370)

To consider exempt appendices relating to Item 3 on the agenda.

ABOUT THIS AGENDA:

On request, this agenda can be provided in alternative versions (such as large print, Braille or audio) and in alternative languages.

ABOUT THIS MEETING:

The press and public are welcome to observe the public sessions of the decision day via the webcast.

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

Decision Maker	Executive Lead Member for Children's Services
Date:	17 May 2022
Title:	DWP Household Support Fund April – September 2022
Report From:	Director of Children's Services

Contact name: Suzanne Smith, Assistant Director, Children's Services

Tel: 01962 846270

Email: Suzane.smith2@hants.gov.uk

Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to outline the proposed approach for allocation of the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) Household Support Fund Extension across Hampshire for the period April – September 2022. This report seeks approval from the Executive Lead Member for spend and grant funding to organisations in support of vulnerable households via the connect4communities programme.
2. The expectation is that the grant should primarily be used to support households in the most need particularly those including children and pensioners who would otherwise struggle with energy bills, food and water bills. Energy bills may be of particular concern to low income households during the period of the scheme and Local Authorities should especially consider how they can support households with the cost of energy. It can also be used to support households with essential costs related to those items and with wider essential costs. In exceptional cases of genuine emergency it can additionally be used to support housing costs where existing housing support schemes do not meet this exceptional need.

Recommendation(s)

3. It is recommended that funding of up to £575,000 is provided in grants to expand existing community pantry provision and to organisations seeking to further develop a broader offer alongside the pantries to include health services, employment support and other services funded by means other than the DWP Household Support Fund extension. Community pantries will ensure a sustainable source of support for food poverty is in place beyond the period of the grant. Such grant will be provided on terms to be agreed by the Director of Children's Services and in accordance with the grant criteria set out in paragraph 16.

4. It is recommended that a grant of £810,000 is made available to the Citizens Advice Service to provide emergency financial support to vulnerable households with fuel bills. Such grant will be provided on terms to be agreed by the Director of Children's Services and in accordance with the grant criteria set out in paragraph 16.
5. It is recommended that the Executive Lead Member delegates authority to the Director of Children's Services to approve community grants to organisations delivering services that meet the criteria of the grant (as set out in paragraph 16) for targeted financial support for those in need, in consultation with the Executive Lead Member up to the total value of £300,000.
6. It is recommended that a total of £500,500 is allocated to district and borough councils in Hampshire for exceptional housing support which meets the DWP grant criteria described in paragraph 31. Such grant will be provided on terms to be agreed by the Director of Children's Services and in accordance with the DWP grant criteria set out in paragraphs 16 and 33.
7. It is recommended that a further £3,223,920 is allocated to district and borough councils in Hampshire for support to vulnerable pensioners and other households in accordance with the DWP criteria set out in paragraph 16.
8. It is recommended that the Executive Lead Member approves the grant of £752,440 funding to schools, colleges and early years setting for a discretionary grant to support vulnerable households with children in accordance with the grant guidance set out in paragraph 16.
9. It is recommended that the Executive Lead Member delegates approval to the Director of Children's Services to approve the reallocation of any Household Support Fund remaining or underspent funds from initiatives set out in paragraphs 2-8 to organisations delivering services that meet the criteria of the grant set out in paragraph 16 in consultation with the Executive Lead Member.

Executive Summary

10. This report seeks to detail the proposed approach and offer for the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) Household Support Fund Extension across Hampshire. A key aim for the connect4communities programme will be to continue to support sustainable and environmentally beneficial food poverty support.

Background

11. In the Spring Statement delivered on the 23 March 2022, the Chancellor announced that the funding for the Household Support Fund will continue to help households with the cost of essentials such as food, clothing and

utilities.

12. Due to Hampshire schools breaking up for the Easter holidays on the 8th April, the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services approved the decision to issue food vouchers to eligible children at a value of £15 per child per week in advance of the guidance being received by the local authority. The decision was made on the assumption that because this was an extension to an existing grant, the guidance would remain unchanged.
13. Approval was given on 1st April for £733,560 of funding for schools, colleges and early years providers who were more than two miles from a connect4communities pantry so that they could provide food vouchers to eligible families. For schools less than two miles from a connect4communities pantry, £479,639 was funded from the October – March Household Support Fund to the pantries for eligible families to collect.
14. Funding for free school meal vouchers was made available to:
 - All children who are eligible for benefits related Free School Meals (FSM)
 - All children with a social worker
 - All children open to early help services
 - 16–18-year-olds previously eligible for FSM
 - All 2–4-year-olds accessing childcare and eligible for Early Years Pupil Premium.
15. The final guidance relating to the grant extension was shared with local authorities on 20 April 2022 ([Household Support Fund \(1 April 2022 to 30 September 2022\): final guidance for county councils and unitary authorities in England - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)). The guidance confirms that Hampshire County Councils allocation is £7,124,127.25 to be spent from 01 April 2022 to 30 September 2022. Despite being a grant extension, any grant underspend from the grant relating to the previous period cannot be carried forward and there are some changes to the grant guidance.
16. The expectation is that the grant should primarily be used to support households in the most need particularly those including children and pensioners who would otherwise struggle with energy bills, food and water bills. Energy bills may be of particular concern to low income households during the period of the scheme and Local Authorities should especially consider how they can support households with the cost of energy. It can also be used to support households with essential costs related to those items and with wider essential costs. In exceptional cases of genuine emergency it can additionally be used to support housing costs where existing housing support schemes do not meet this exceptional need.
17. The main change to the grant relating to the earlier period is that at least one third of the total funding must be ring fenced to support households with

children (rather than 50% previously) and at least one third must be ring fenced to support pensioners, with the remaining amount to other households genuinely in need of support. A significant proportion of the previous grants over the last two years have been allocated to food vouchers for eligible children during the school holidays, this new criterion means we are no longer able to offer support to households with children in this way.

Consultation

18. A variety of stakeholders have been consulted so that existing local provision and need can be identified, risks in respect of duplication of funding can be addressed and emerging ideas validated or challenged. The engagement has included Adult Health and Care, Community Pantries, Citizens Advice Service, housing associations, and District Councils.

The Proposed Hampshire Offer

Financial Context

19. Table One below gives a high-level illustration on how the grant could be allocated between the types of households according to the DWP criteria.

Table One: Household Support Fund Extension breakdown

	£
Administration (at 5%)	356,205
Households with Children	2,255,974
Pensioners	2,255,974
Other Households	2,255,974
Total grant	7,124,127

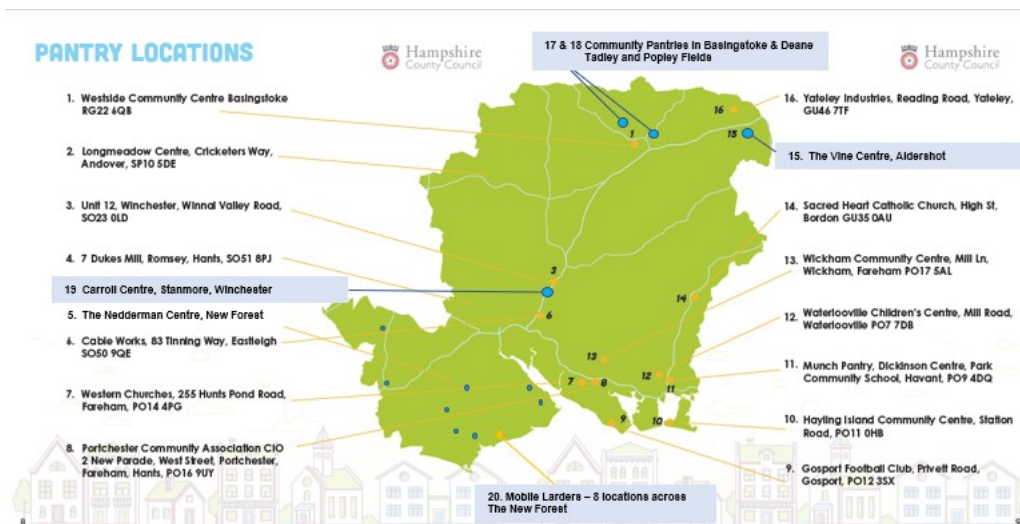
20. Funding has already been spent for the Easter holidays for households with children of £733,560 and therefore, the amount remaining that can be targeted to households with children is **£1,522,414**.

Provision for all vulnerable households

21. It is proposed that funding is provided to continue to support the network of existing community pantries to provide sustainable alternatives to free school meal vouchers and support to any vulnerable household including pensioners and households without children.
22. Approval is sought from the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services to delegate authority to the Director of Children's Services to approve grant awards to organisations for the delivery of such schemes up to the value of £575,000. Through the grant, we will also work with organisations to provide a network through which further support can be offered to work with the

community pantries to develop a broader support offer including health services, employment support and financial support and advisory services, funded by means other than the DWP Household Support Grant.

23. Community pantries work on the principle of giving those in need the opportunity to have a 'helping hand' by getting food at a lower rate on a weekly basis. Items found in the pantry will be a range of fresh, frozen and general foods which will change on a weekly basis. Access to the community pantry is by way of membership and, for a small weekly contribution, members receive food to a significantly higher value than if purchased in local shops or the supermarket. For example, members are charged a nominal sum of £5.00 per shop and receive £15 plus worth of goods. Community pantries will be encouraged to provide a delivery service for those who are not able to come and shop for whatever reason.
24. The map below shows where the community pantries are located across the Hampshire, with the new pantries marked in blue:



25. Supported by funding from previous Household Support Fund grants, the number of community pantries in Hampshire has increased from 16 to 20 and the target of doubling the number of households per week accessing the pantries has been exceeded.
26. Governance is in place to allow the connect4communities programme to work effectively with the network of pantries. An operational group of pantry managers provides support and best practice and a strategic group with members from the County Council, food providers, the voluntary sector and other groups aims to ensure the future sustainability of the pantries and develop joint solutions to shared problems.
27. It is recommended that a grant of £675,000 is made available to the Citizens Advice Service to support the most vulnerable households in Hampshire. During engagement with stakeholders, it was felt that, when the initial connect4communities programme was set up, targeting this funding at fuel

bills will reduce the potential for double funding with other grants available and asking Citizens Advice to administer the fund will ensure that any financial support can be provided alongside broader support and advice. Citizens Advice are also well placed to undertake ID and benefits checks to mitigate potential risks of fraudulent claims.

28. Citizens Advice will require an additional £135,000 administration fee to implement the support. It is anticipated that over 4,500 households will benefit from this funding.
29. It is recommended that a grant of £300,000 is made available for organisations who wish to support their local community with food and fuel poverty, particularly in rural areas. Any funded support must meet the DWP grant criteria and use of such a grant fund will enable a flexible and responsive approach to addressing local needs as and when they are identified. This fund will also provide support to households who may not be able to access other initiatives set out in this report.
30. As per the previous grant round, it is recommended that £500,500 is distributed to district and borough councils to support households with exceptional housing costs, as identified in the DWP grant guidance.

Targeted provision

31. It is recommended that the Executive Lead Member approves the grant of £752,440 funding to schools, colleges and early years setting such that they have a discretionary grant to support vulnerable households with children in accordance. Schools will be able to provide food vouchers if they feel that is the most appropriate form of support, however any vouchers should not be explicitly associated with school holiday periods as there is insufficient funding available to support all vulnerable households in this way.
32. The Household Support Fund criteria includes provision for support of housing costs, in exceptional cases of genuine emergency where existing housing support schemes do not meet this exceptional need. The grant cannot be used:
 - For ongoing support for rent or mortgage payments
 - When eligibility for Discretionary Housing Payments (DHPs) must be considered first, and
 - Where there is a statutory risk of homelessness and therefore a duty of support is owed through the Homelessness Prevention Grant (HPG).
33. It is recommended that a further £3,223,920 is distributed to district and borough councils for support for vulnerable pensioners and other households as per the DWP grant guidance. In order to ensure an equitable provision across Hampshire it is proposed that;
 - Individuals in receipt of pension credit are awarded an £80 food voucher

- Individuals in receipt of council tax benefit are awarded a £75 food voucher.
34. It is recommended that district and borough councils can top slice some funding, increasing their grant allocation if additional administration costs are required to distribute the grant.

Administration Costs

35. The DWP Household Support Fund guidance allows for reasonable administration costs to be funded from the grant allocation such that enable local authorities, and their partners can deliver the programme.
36. The County Council intends to use up to £344,597 (5%) of the funding to cover reasonable administration costs for all partners which will include relevant staff costs and administration costs of partner organisations.
37. The DWP is keen that a telephone helpline is provided to help signpost households to support funded through the Household Support Fund. It is proposed that the existing Hampshire County Council Childrens Services and General Helplines are used for this purpose and funding will be allocated to provide additional capacity to meet the increased scope of the helpline.
38. Extensive communications are planned to ensure that a range of professional agencies and partner organisations are aware of the connect4communities programme and can signpost vulnerable households to the support being offered.
39. Furthermore, the existing connect4communities directory will be further developed so that organisations and community groups can publish details of any local opportunities or support they wish to share. This is hosted on the Hampshire Family Information and Services Hub:
(FISH: <https://fish.hants.gov.uk/kb5/hampshire/directory/home.page>)
40. This directory enables residents of Hampshire to search by postcode to identify where they may be able to access financial and other support including subsidised food. For Hampshire County Council and partners, this will provide a way to capture offers of support beyond those coordinated directly by the connect4communities programme, and an effective way of signposting residents to available support.

Finance

41. A summary of the proposed allocation of funding across the initiatives to be delivered through the connect4communities scheme, funded by the Household Support Fund is set out in table 2.

Table 2:

connect4communities – Hampshire County Council Household Support Fund Extension	
Component	Funding allocation (£)
Community Pantries	575,000
Citizen's Advice	675,000
Community Grants	300,000
Exceptional Housing Support to district and borough councils	500,500
Schools Discretionary Grant	752,440
District and Borough Targeted Fund	3,223,920
Administration costs	344,597
Contingency	19,110
Sub total	6,390,567
Easter Holiday Vouchers for vulnerable children	733,560
Total plan	7,124,127

Performance

42. All funding granted to third party organisations (including schools, colleges, early years providers and district and borough councils) will be supported by a grant agreement setting out the conditions of the funding as well as reporting requirements.
43. Third party organisations will be required to report to the County Council on how they have spent the funding provided, in line with the DWP grant criteria set out in paragraph 16.
44. Allocation of funding across the grant criteria set out in paragraph 16 will be monitored to ensure spend remains compliant with the terms of the grant.

Consultation and Equalities

45. Consultation and engagement have been undertaken as part of developing and delivering the connect4communities programme.
46. School and colleges have previously been consulted regarding their preferred method of supporting children with food by way of a questionnaire.
47. An Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed and will be published after the decision day.

Climate Change Impact Assessment

48. Hampshire County Council utilises two decision-making tools to assess the carbon emissions and resilience impacts of its projects and decisions. These tools provide a clear, robust, and transparent way of assessing how projects, policies and initiatives contribute towards the County Council's climate change targets of being carbon neutral and resilient to the impacts of a 2°C temperature rise by 2050. This process ensures that climate change considerations are built into everything the Authority does.

Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation

49. The carbon mitigation tool and climate change adaptation tools were not applicable on this occasion because the decision relates to a programme that is strategic/administrative in nature.

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	Yes
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	Yes
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	No
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	Yes
OR	

Other Significant Links

Links to previous Member decisions:	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents	
<p>The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)</p>	
<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
None	

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

1. Equality Duty

The County Council has a duty under Section 169 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 169(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 169(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

2. Equalities Impact Assessment:

See guidance at <https://hants.sharepoint.com/sites/ID/SitePages/Equality-Impact-Assessments.aspx?web=1>

Insert in full your **Equality Statement** which will either state:

- (a) *why you consider that the project/proposal will have a low or no impact on groups with protected characteristics or*
- (b) *will give details of the identified impacts and potential mitigating actions*

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HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

Decision Maker:	Executive Lead Member for Children's Services
Date:	17 May 2022
Title:	Wyvern College, Fair Oak
Report From:	Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services

Contact names: Bob Wallbridge and John Cantwell

Tel: 0370 7994084 **Email:** bob.wallbridge@hants.gov.uk
0370 7796580 john.cantwell@hants.gov.uk

Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to seek spend approval to the project proposals at Wyvern College to enhance the safety and security of the school site together with internal alteration to the existing buildings.

Recommendations

2. That the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services, grants spend approval to the project proposals for Wyvern College at the total cost of £964,000.

Executive Summary

3. Wyvern College provides education for up to 1,350 secondary age children, 9 FE (forms of entry).
4. The project comprises external works to improve safeguarding and security and internal reconfiguration to improve the layout of the school's accommodation.
5. The project is included in the Children Services Capital Programme, approved at the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services Decision Day on 10 January 2020 with a budget of £2,200,000.
6. A planning application was submitted in March 2022 and a decision is anticipated in May/June 2022.

Background

7. Wyvern College is a coeducational secondary academy school that provides education for children aged between 11 and 16 years old. There are currently 1,301 pupils on roll. The number attending the school is not planned to increase as a result of these proposals. Wyvern College is part of a larger school campus that also includes Fair Oak Infant and Fair Oak Junior Schools.
8. The project is included in the Children's Services Capital Programme, approved at the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services Decision Day on 10 January 2020, which outlines the available budget for the project. The project is to be funded by developers' contributions from new housing in the local area, previously secured by the Council.
9. Previous approvals were sought for the addition of an all-weather pitch and ICT investment, approved 26 February 2020 with a total cost of £1,164,000 and for security fencing that was constructed to the rear of the school site in the autumn 2019 under delegated officer approval with a cost of £72,000.
10. The existing school frontage, including both car park and hardstanding areas, is largely open to the public throughout the day and construction of the new secure fence and gates, together with the relocation of 9 car park spaces will enhance the security to the site.
11. The reconfiguration of three internal teaching spaces, both specialist and general teaching, will improve the current provision and create a more useful and accessible accommodation layout together with the provision of additional lockers throughout the campus
12. The number of pupils attending the school is not planned to increase as a result of these proposals.

Finance

13 Capital Expenditure:

The Capital Expenditure has already been approved in principle. The following table outlines the breakdown of its distribution across the project.

Capital Expenditure	Current Estimate	Capital Programme	
		£'000	£'000
Buildings		827	827
Fees		137	137
Total		964	964

14. Sources of Funding

Financial Provision for Total Scheme	Buildings £'000	Fees £'000	Total Cost £'000
1. From Own Resources			
a) Capital Programme (as above)	0	0	0
2. From Other Resources			
a) Developer Contributions	827	137	964
Total	827	137	964

i. *Building Cost:*

The works are a combination of external and internal refurbishment so usual gross and net metrics of building costs are not relevant and not included in this section.

ii. *Furniture & Equipment:*

Included in the above figures is an allocation of £70,000 for the provision of all loose furniture, fittings, equipment and I.T. (inclusive of fees).

iii. *School Balances:*

The school has the following level of balances:

Published revenue balance as at 31 March 2021: £n/a - Academy

Devolved capital as at 31 March 2021: £n/a - Academy

Revenue Issues:

iv. *Overview of Revenue Implications:*

	(a) Employees £'000	(b) er £'000	Oth *Net Current Expenditure £'000	(a+b) Capital ges £'000	Char (a + b + c) Total Net Expenditure £'000
Revenue Implications Additional + / Reductions					

Details of Site and Existing Infrastructure

15. Wyvern College is a secondary school located off Botley Road, Fair Oak and is part of The Wyvern Campus together with Fair Oak Infant and Fair Oak Junior Schools.

16. Wyvern College was originally built in 1966 and is predominantly of single and two storey SCOLA system building accommodation. It has been extended a number of times over the years to provide additional accommodation and these extensions to compliment the character of the original school building.
17. The Wyvern College campus has a frontage to the Botley Road to the east with a car park and access road serving the school buildings to the centre of site. To the south, the College shares its campus with Fair Oak Infant and Junior Schools. A public footpath runs from east to west along the College's northern boundary.
18. The existing services infrastructure to the site are sufficient to accommodate the project proposals.

Scope of the Project

19. The proposed project comprises the installation of a secure 1.8m high fence to the school frontage together with both manual and automated security gates. There are 9 car parking spaces to be relocated within the existing school car park. A new access footpath to facilitate drop off and pick up to the adjoining infant and junior school is also to be constructed. Internally there are proposals for existing teaching spaces are to be reconfigured and relocated to suit the school's needs and organisation.

The Proposed Building Works

20. The proposed internal alteration works will provide:
 - A new media suite
 - A new drama teaching space
 - Partitioning to provide improved acoustic separation to circulation routes
 - New fixed furniture
 - New finishes to remodelled spaces

External Works

21. The proposed external works comprise:
 - Automated gates with intercom
 - Secure fencing
 - 9 no. relocated parking spaces
 - External lockers
 - New access paths with external lighting
22. The project will provide relocated car parking on the school site which will be in line with the Hampshire County Council On-Site School Parking. There will be 9 relocated car parking spaces provided for staff and visitors. The accessible parking at the school is not affected.

Planning

23. A planning application was submitted in March 2022 and a decision is anticipated in May/June 2022.

Construction Management

24. Wyvern College together with the adjacent Fair Oak Infant and Fair Oak Junior Schools will remain in use during the construction period and local management arrangements will be put in place to manage the health and safety during the construction period on site. It is proposed that the contractor will access the school site via the existing shared access road. The contractor's working areas will be segregated from the school users.
25. No deliveries or movements of vehicles will take place at the start or end of the school day, in order to avoid traffic conflict when pupils are arriving at or departing from the school.
26. The works will be procured through the County Council's Minor Works Framework and the Landscape Framework and are anticipated to commence on site and complete during the summer of this year.

Building Management

27. The existing building management arrangements will remain in place.

Professional Resources

- | | |
|---------------------------|--|
| 28. Architectural - | Culture, Communities & Business Services |
| Landscape - | Culture, Communities & Business Services |
| Mechanical & Electrical - | Culture, Communities & Business Services |
| Structural Engineering - | Culture, Communities & Business Services |
| Quantity Surveying - | Culture, Communities & Business Services |
| Principal Designer - | Culture, Communities & Business Services |
| Drainage Engineering - | Economy, Transport and Environment |

Consultation and Equalities

29. The following have been consulted during the development of this project and feedback can be seen in overview in Appendix A:

Headteacher
School Governors
Children's Services
Executive Lead Member for Children's Services
Local County Councillor
Local Residents

Fire Officer
Access Officer
Planning Department

Risk & Impact Issues

Fire Risk Assessment

30. With respect to fire safety and property protection, the proposals have been risk assessed in line with the agreed Property Services procedures and confirmed that the provision of sprinklers is not required in this instance.
31. The proposals will meet the requirements of the Building Regulations (BB100 Fire Safety in Schools), including enhancements beyond minimum provision, and are consistent with current fire safety legislation, the partnership arrangement with Hampshire Fire and Rescue Services, and are in line with the County Council's policy to manage corporate risk.
32. The project proposals include the following fire and safety and enhanced features.
 - Additional automatic fire protection, with full (24/7) remote monitoring.
 - Consideration of secure by design principles including specific site security, bin storage away from building, external lighting etc.

Health and Safety

33. Design risk assessments, pre-construction health & safety information and Health & Safety File will be produced and initiated in accordance with the Construction design and Management Regulations for the proposed scheme.

Climate Change

34. Hampshire County Council utilises two decision-making tools to assess the carbon emissions and resilience of its projects and decisions. These tools provide a clear, robust, and transparent way of assessing how projects, policies and initiatives contribute towards the County Council's climate change targets of being carbon neutral and resilient to the impacts of a 2°C temperature rise by 2050. This process ensures that climate change considerations are built into everything the Authority does.
35. The Adaptation Project Screening Tool identifies that in extreme circumstances, strong winds, storm events and heat waves arising from Climate Change in the future, could have the potential to affect the use of the building, but generally the scheme is considered to have low vulnerability to climate change.

36. The project will incorporate the following features to reduce energy consumption and mitigate the impact of climate change:
- Provision of good levels of day lighting to all teaching areas to reduce the need for artificial lighting and energy use.
 - Natural ventilation to main spaces with night-time cooling strategy.
 - Energy efficient lighting and heating controls.
 - The use of timber from sustainable sources.
 - A site waste management plan will be developed to ensure that during construction the principles of minimising waste are maintained.

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	Yes
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	Yes
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	Yes
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	Yes

Links to previous Member decisions:	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents	
<p>The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)</p>	
<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
None	

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

1. Equality Duty

The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

2. Equalities Impact Assessment:

Please see Appendix B

FEEDBACK FROM CONSULTEES:**OTHER EXECUTIVE MEMBERS:**

Executive Member & Portfolio	Reason for Consultation	Date Consulted	Response:
Councillor Roz Chadd, Executive Lead Member for Children's Services	Portfolio Holder		

OTHER FORMAL CONSULTEES:

Member/ Councillor	Reason for Consultation	Date Consulted	Response:
Councillor S Broomfield	Local Member for West End & Horton Heath		No comments received



Equality Impact Assessment

What is an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) and why does the County Council do them?

The [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) (PSED) is an obligation within the [Equality Act 2010](#) ("the Act"), which asks public authorities, like Hampshire County Council, to give 'due regard' to equality considerations, in particular to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

This includes assessing the impact of policies and practices on individuals and communities with a protected characteristic, as defined in the Act and some other specific groups. The County Council uses EIAs to ensure it has paid 'due regard' to equalities considerations when there are changes to a service or policy, a new project or certain decisions.

EIA author	Position & Department	Contact
Amy Chambers	Assistant Strategic Development Officer Children's Services	amy.chambers@hants.gov.uk Tel:03707 798802

Title:	EIA 232 - Wyvern College (Academy), Fair Oak
Related EIAs:	EIA Number: None

EIA for Savings Programme:

No

Service affected	Children's Services - Wyvern College (Academy), Fair Oak
Description of the service/policy/project/project phase	<p>Wyvern College is a secondary school in Fair Oak, Eastleigh providing education for children aged between 11 and 16 years old. The school is part of the Wyvern College Academy Trust and currently provides education for up to 1350 secondary age children. Wyvern College is part of a larger school campus that also includes Fair Oak Infant (Community) and Fair Oak Junior (Community) Schools.</p> <p>The Wyvern Community College campus has a frontage to the Botley Road to the east with a car park and access road serving the school buildings to the centre of site. To the south, the College shares its campus with Fair Oak Infant and Junior Schools. A public footpath runs from east to west along the College's northern boundary.</p> <p>The number of children attending the school is not planned to increase as a result of these proposals.</p>
New/changed service/policy/project	<p>The proposed project comprises of external works to improve safeguarding and security and internal reconfiguration to improve the layout of the school's accommodation. It is proposed that the installation of a secure 1.8m high fence to the school frontage together with both manual and automated security gates. 9 car parking spaces are to be relocated to the wider school car park. A new access footpath to facilitate drop off and pick up to the adjoining infant and junior school is also to be constructed. Internal teaching spaces are to be reconfigured and relocated to suit the school's organisation. The proposed internal alteration works will provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A new Media suite• A new drama teaching space• Partitioning to provide acoustic separation to circulation routes• New fixed furniture• New finishes to remodelled spaces. <p>The existing school frontage, including both car park and hardstanding areas, is largely open to the public throughout the day and construction of the new secure fence and gates, together with the relocation of 9 car park spaces will address the current security concerns. The reconfiguration of three internal teaching spaces, both specialist and general teaching, will make a more logical accommodation layout together with the provision of additional lockers throughout the campus.</p>

Engagement

A consultation ran from 12th June 2019 to 26th July 2019.

The project proposal was also included on the Hampshire County Council's (HCC) consultation website: Pre-planning Consultation – Wyvern College | About the Council | Hampshire County Council (hants.gov.uk)

Letters were sent to; Parents of children at the school (via the school) • Headteacher • Chair of Governors • School staff • Headteachers, Chairs of Governors & parents of children at all schools within 3 miles (via the schools) • Staff union representatives • MP • HCC Elected member • Local District and Parish Council • Early Years Development and Childcare • Other relevant HCC Officers •

A public meeting was held at the school on 10 July 2019 to allow stakeholders to put forward their views on the proposal directly to officers, offer alternate proposals and ask any questions they might have had.

Additional Information

The project is included in the Children's Services Capital Programme, approved at the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services decision day on 10 January 2020, which outlines the available budget for the project.

Age

Impact on public	Positive
Impact on staff	Positive
Rationale	<p>Currently parents of Fair Oak Infant and Junior Schools can access the schools via a footpath off of Dean Road, Fair Oak. The footpath leads parents towards Wyvern College main building and takes the parents by classroom windows. This is of a safeguarding and security concern for Wyvern College as the times which parents walk past the windows are when lessons are taking place and therefore the movement of people outside on the school site can be distracting. The new proposed school access path will allow parents to still access the infant and junior school from Dean Road, but will ensure that the children at Wyvern College are not distracted during lessons, and are kept safe and secure. The addition of a 1.8m high secure fence around the frontage of the school will also improve the safety and security of the pupils and staff across the campus. The existing school frontage, including both car park and hardstanding areas, is largely open to the public throughout the day and construction of the new secure fence and gates, together with the relocation of 9 car park spaces will address the current security concerns. The proposed internal building alterations will provide a new media suite, a new drama teaching space and will provide acoustic separation to circulation routes. These additions along with new fixed furniture and new finishes to the remodelled spaces will benefit the students currently at the school and future students as it will provide them with a better environment to receive their education in. The new internal alterations will also benefit the staff at the school as it will provide them with a better working environment. This will undoubtedly have a positive impact on the mental health of both staff and students.</p>
Mitigation	

Disability

Impact on public	Positive
Impact on staff	Positive

Rationale	<p>The new path that is being installed for parents will be accessible to all which will enable anyone with a physical disability to use it. The new path is no longer than the current route being walked by parents and therefore there is no additional distance they will need to be travelled.</p> <p>The internal improvements that are proposed will provide acoustic separation to circulation routes which will benefit both staff and pupils, especially those with a hearing impairment.</p> <p>The 9 parking spaces that are being relocated to the wider school car park so there will be no loss of availability for staff. There is no impact on the current accessible car parking spaces that the school provides. The project will provide relocated car parking on the school site which will be in line with the Hampshire County Council On-Site School Parking Guidelines: https://documents.hants.gov.uk/parking/On-siteSchoolParkingGuidelines.pdf</p>
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Mitigation	
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Gender Reassignment

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	The proposed change is expected to have a neutral impact on people who share gender reassignment as a protected characteristic
Mitigation	

Pregnancy and Maternity

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral

Rationale	The proposed change is expected to have a neutral impact on people who share pregnancy and maternity as a protected characteristic. As mentioned previously, the new route is no longer than the current route that parents are walking and therefore the journey through Wyvern College to Fair Oak Infant and Junior School will be no longer as a result of the new path being installed.
Mitigation	

Race

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	The proposed change is expected to have a neutral impact on people who share race as a protected characteristic.
Mitigation	

Religion or Belief

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	The proposed change is expected to have a neutral impact on people who share race as a protected characteristic.

Mitigation

Sex

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	The proposed change is expected to have a neutral impact on people who share sex as a protected characteristic.
Mitigation	

Sexual Orientation

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	The proposed change is expected to have a neutral impact on people who share sexual orientation as a protected characteristic.
Mitigation	

Marriage and Civil Partnership

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	The proposed change is expected to have a neutral impact on people who share marriage and civil partnership as a protected characteristic.
Mitigation	

Poverty

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	The proposed change is expected to have a neutral impact on people who share poverty as a protected characteristic. As mentioned before, those who walk to school will still be able to access the campus via the Dean Road footpath.
Mitigation	

Rurality

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	The proposed change is expected to have a neutral impact on people who share rurality as a protected characteristic. Those who use the current footpath accessed via Dean Road either live locally and walk to school, or park and stride. There is no anticipated increase in the number of people using the new footpath.
Mitigation	

Mitigation

Geographical Impact: Eastleigh

Equality Statement

Additional information:

The consultation documents were available online and could also be requested in paper form. Responses were collated via email, post and in person at the consultation drop in held at the school. Every effort has been made to ensure that key stakeholders are able to access and comment on the public notice.

Overview Statement:

Assessment to show that due regard has been given and that there is no requirement for a full EIA:

EIA reference number: 00232







Date of production of EIA for publication: 06/05/2022

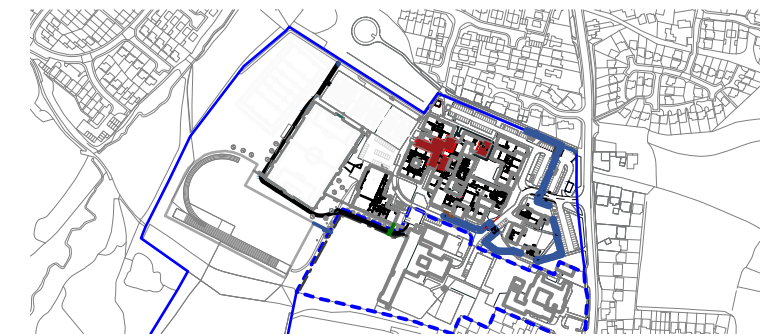
Wyvern College Proposed Improvements

The aim of the project is to deliver
To create additional quality spaces to the existing college. To remodel parts of the existing college and address space and circulation issues inherent in the existing buildings.

Key

- ① **To increase the number of classrooms.**
Move the proposed Media suite to the existing Technology space. Turn existing Media suite into a standard classroom. Include for corridor to allow Technology passage through department.
- ② **To improve safety and access in corridors.**
Create a new corridor space by shortening existing classrooms.
- ③ Move internal lockers from corridors and classrooms to the new outside spaces providing 270 new external quality lockers.
- ④ Switch the second Drama space and the Internal Exclusion Room which is a discontinued Technology space, create a separation corridor as well as a Drama teaching space in the footprint.
- ⑤ Front area automated gates and fencing, safe-guarding improvements.
- ⑥ Nine car parking spaces relocated to enable installation of automated gates.
- ⑦ Rear area new access path with lighting and various fencing alterations.

-  Pedestrian Access
-  Vehicular Access
-  Contractor Access
-  Main Entrance
-  Site Boundary
-  North Point



Rev	Description	Date	By	Chkd

HCC Property Services,
Three Ministers House,
76 High Street, Winchester SO23 8UL
tel: (01962) 847801



PROJECT NAME
Wyvern Internal Alterations & Safe Guarding External Works

General Notes

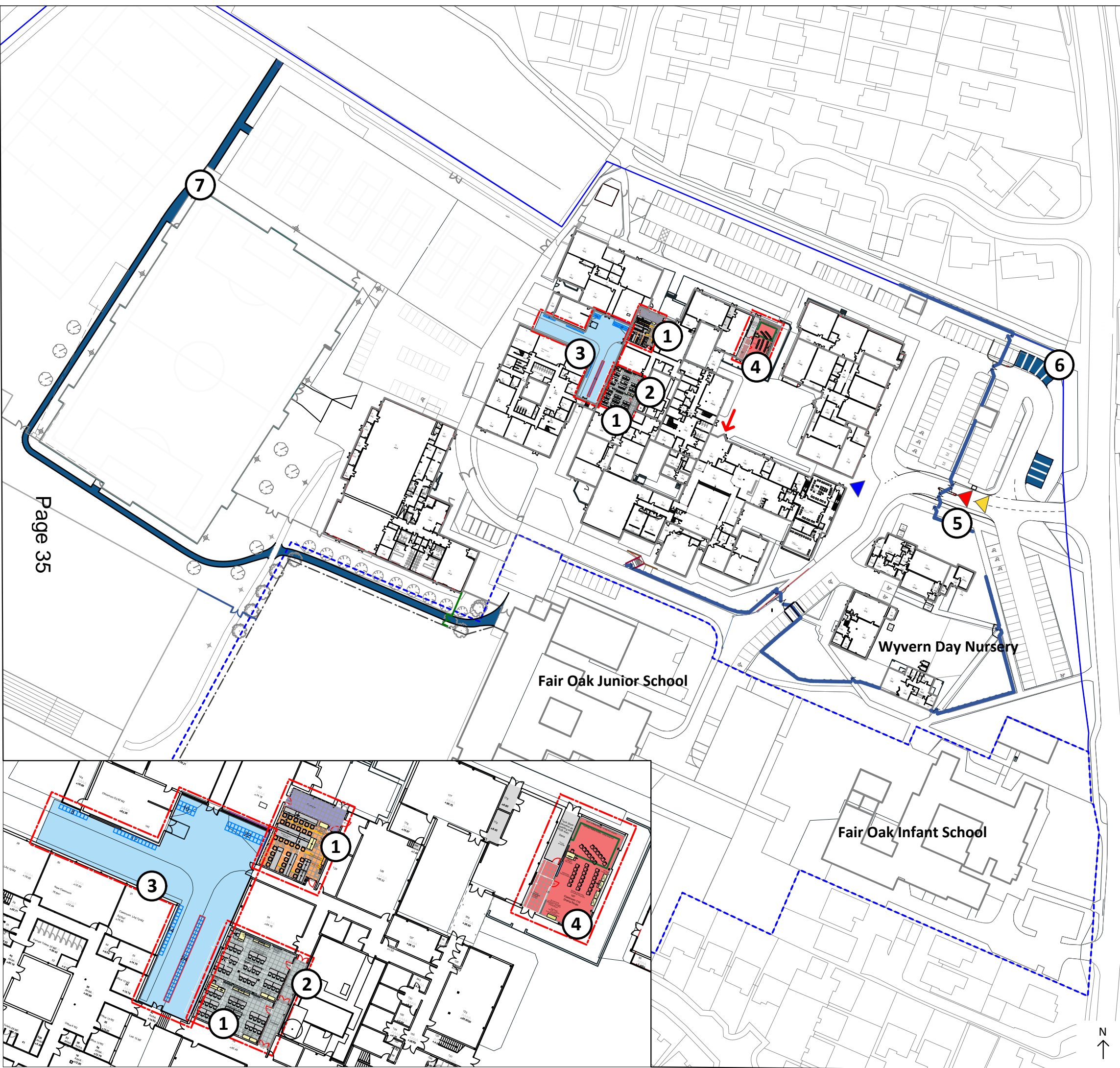
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EME Report

SCALE 1:200 @ A3
DRAWN BM
CHKD NJ
APRV XXX

DRAWING No.
P12672A-HCC-01-DR-A-1001

SUITABILITY
code description
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HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

Decision Maker:	Executive Lead Member for Children's Services
Date:	17 May 2022
Title:	Statements of Purpose for Hampshire's Children's Homes, Fostering, and Adoption Services
Report From:	Director of Children's Services

Contact name: Sarah Smith

Tel: 07703449262

Email: sarah.smith2@hants.gov.uk

1. Purpose of this Report

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to present the updated Statement of Purpose of Hampshire's Children's Homes, Fostering, and Adoption Services (see Appendices B-M) for approval by the Executive Lead Member.
- 1.2. The significant changes are presented in this report whilst Appendix A highlights the specific parts of the Statements that have been revised since they were last presented for ease of reference.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1. That the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services approves the updated Statements of Purpose for Children's Homes, the Fostering Service, and the Adoption Service.

3. Executive Summary

- 3.1. The Children's Homes (England) Regulations and National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services and Adoption Services require that the registered provider (in the case of a Local Authority, the Elected Members) formally approves the Statement of Purpose of Services and reviews, updates and modifies it where necessary.

4. Contextual Information

- 4.1. The Regulations and Guidance for the Children's Homes, Fostering Services, and Adoption Services state that the service provider (in this instance, Hampshire Children's Services Department) shall compile, in relation to the service, a written statement, referred to as The Statement of Purpose, which shall consist of:

- a) A statement of the aims and objectives of the service; and
 - b) A statement as to the services and facilities to be provided by the service.
- 4.2. The provider is responsible for providing a copy of the Statement of Purpose to Ofsted, the body which inspects the services, and the following key stakeholders:
- i) Any person working for the purposes of the service.
 - ii) Any foster/adoptive parent or prospective foster/adoptive parent.
 - iii) Any child placed within any of the services; and
 - iv) The parent of any such child.
- 4.3. A children's version of the Statement of Purpose is also available.
- 4.4. The proposals in this report are expected to support the County Council's Strategic Plan as follows:
- Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity.
 - People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives.
 - People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment; and
 - People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities.

5. **Performance**

- 5.1. Ofsted assesses the extent to which each Statement of Purpose is an accurate reflection of the service provided.

6. **Consultation and Equalities**

- 6.1. The proposal in this report does not require consultation and equality and diversity objectives are not considered to be adversely affected by the proposal. The Statements of Purpose ensure that all needs are met and address the protected characteristics where relevant.

7. **Revisions to the Statement of Purpose**

- 7.1. The information within the Statement of Purpose (SOP) is used to identify that the home is the right home for the child and that the home will be able to respond effectively to the child's needs.
- 7.2. Hampshire has eight mixed gender children's homes offering between two, four and five places to children and young people aged between 10 and 17 years old:
- Abenrise, (Appendix B)
 - Amani, (Appendix C)
 - Berry View, (Appendix D)
 - Candle Lodge, (Appendix E)

- Crofton House, (Appendix F)
 - Ferne Lodge, (Appendix G)
 - Cypress Lodge, (Appendix H)
 - The Mead, (Appendix I)
- 7.3. As part of the continuum of overnight resources supporting children and young people with complex learning difficulties and their families, in conjunction with Hampshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, Hampshire County Council also provides one residential respite unit (Firvale – Appendix K). Firvale provides five social care respite placements / beds and nine health beds though is temporarily closed as is discussed later in the report.
- 7.4. In addition, Hampshire provides a secure children’s home; Swanwick Lodge (Appendix J). This is a national resource for up to 16 young people of either gender aged 10* – 17 years who need to be placed in a secure setting to safeguard their welfare.
**the appropriate Minister of State must approve the placement of children aged under 13 years"*

8. **Children’s Residential Care and Covid-19**

- 8.1. As a response to the Covid 19 pandemic, the Statements of Purpose of three homes were changed, they are now being changed back to where they were before the pandemic. The changes involved consolidating staffing within the residential service to increase the resilience of the service as a whole and maintain the care of the children. Two long stay homes were temporarily closed for this reason:
- Candle Lodge – 9 April 2020
 - Abenrise – 15 April 2020
- 8.2. A further home was closed, Firvale, on 6 April 2020, that provided overnight respite for children with disabilities. This was due to the difficulties in managing the operation of that home safely during the pandemic, however, the staff were also redeployed to our long stay homes to increase their resilience.
- 8.3. Children and young people who were living at Candle Lodge and Abenrise were placed in other Hampshire Children’s Homes and staff were deployed across the residential service to ensure sufficient capacity during the pandemic. Children and families who were receiving respite care at Firvale and who had not already withdrawn in response to social distancing guidance were supported to identify alternative support by the relevant Disabled Children’s Team.
- 8.4. The loss of capacity of closing Candle Lodge and Abenrise was partly offset by temporary variations in registration so that five rather than four

places could be offered in three of the homes – Crofton House, Ferne Lodge and Amani.

- 8.5. These arrangements provided sufficient capacity and flexibility to respond to substantial numbers of residential and support staff who were subsequently required to shield or self-isolate or who contracted Covid-19. These changes required the amendment to the Statements of Purpose for these homes, that has now been removed.

9. Children’s Residential Care and Capacity

- 9.1. Occupancy of Swanwick Lodge was aligned with staff availability during the pandemic; admissions were suspended from December 2020 to end January 2021 following outbreaks of Covid-19 in the home.
- 9.2. As a result of these changes, new staffing arrangements have been agreed for Swanwick Lodge to ensure ongoing stability and these are reflected in the revised Statement of Purpose for Swanwick Lodge.
- 9.3. In light of the easing of Covid restrictions, both Abenrise and Candle Lodge were re-opened on 5th July 2021. The children who were placed at the homes when they temporarily closed in April 2020 either remained in placement at the home they moved to or were transitioned to foster care.
- 9.4. Use of the five social care respite beds at Firvale has not occurred since April 2020 when the home temporarily closed because of the Covid-19 pandemic. As noted by Ofsted in April 2019, Firvale impresses as institutional and privacy for the children has been compromised following housing developments surrounding the unit. Issues with outside drainage continues to present a health and safety risk in the winter and works are needed to upgrade fire doors and widen doorways to improve access.
- 9.5. On 17 January 2021 and with the agreement of the Executive Lead Member for Children’s Services a public and staff consultation regarding Firvale commenced. The County Council is proposing that the unit could remain closed, with respite care offered in alternative accommodation or through the provision of alternative services. The consultation ended on 28 March 2022 and a decision will be made later this year once the responses have been analysed.

10. Children’s Residential Care and Service Developments

- 10.1. The Statement of Purpose for the Mead has been revised following some building and grounds work and a review of its function. In August 2021, works were completed at The Mead to provide the home with separate parking to the garden, improve the garden area, convert the home from oil to gas supply and address the industrial nature of the kitchen.

10.2. Rather than continue to provide long-term care, following the completion of those works, The Mead has operated as short term and emergency provision for young people whose Care Plan is known but the placement that they need is not immediately available. This new model was developed in part in anticipation of the ban on unregulated placements for children under 16 years of age. Whilst these were very rarely used in practice, it was sensible to develop a local provision to ensure they are never required in future.

10.3. The last Decision Report regarding the Statement of Purpose for the children's homes dated 16 September 2020 referred to the development of a new model of Urgent and Extended Care. This service is under review and is being addressed as part of a 5-year Residential Strategy which is being developed in response to high placement demands, limited placement availability and an increasing complexity of need. Simultaneously a strategy is being developed to improve staff recruitment and retention (as a key element of placement sufficiency) to build on several initiatives already undertaken to improve staff capacity.

11. **Children's Residential Care and Changes to the Statements of Purpose**

11.1. In summary, the following revisions to the Statements of Purpose for the Children's Homes have been made:

11.2. A Statement of Purpose detailing the model of care provided at The Mead has been devised (appendix I). This explains the 'offer' of emergency (accelerated) and short-term placements in circumstances where the child's Care Plan is known and agreed but a relevant placement is not yet available.

11.3. The Statements of Purpose for the remaining Children's Homes have been updated to reflect changes to the workforce. This includes new management appointments (The Mead, Candle Lodge, Cypress Lodge and Swanwick Lodge) and workforce development (training and qualifications achieved).

11.4. In addition, each SOP now refers to the prevention and management of Covid-19.

11.5. Detailed amendments to the Statements of Purpose for each of the Children's Homes are listed in Appendix A

11.6. Further revisions to the SOPs will be required this financial year to reflect a change of manager at Berry View (recruiting).

11.7. Additionally, we anticipate potentially substantial revisions to the home's Statements of Purpose following the development of the 5-year Residential Strategy.

12. Fostering Services

12.1. The Fostering Service uses the Statement of Purpose as a competitive positioning tool, which benchmarks local authority and independent services (see Appendix L).

12.2. Prospective carers can use the Statement of Purpose to compare services more easily by reviewing the aims of the service, understanding the process, support and training we offer and reading Ofsted report highlights. This assists in placing Hampshire County Council in a more favourable position within the marketplace.

12.3. An organisational chart of the Fostering Service and descriptions of the teams within the service are presented in a way that is appropriate to the audience, to better understand how the service operates.

12.4. An update has been provided regarding the Hampshire Hives, a new support model for Foster Carers which replicate the support of an extended family approach. The aim of this model is to improve placement stability, improve support for Foster Carers and improve recruitment and retention of Foster Carers.

13. Adoption Service

13.1. The Adoption Service Statement of Purpose sets out the core aims and objectives of Hampshire's Adoption Service (Appendix M). It explains the range of services that are provided to children, prospective adopters, adoptive parents, adopted adults and birth parents through the different strands of the adoption agency.

13.2. The principles and standards within the Statement of Purpose apply to all agency placements.

13.3. The Statement of Purpose reflects the emphasis that the Adoption Service places on the welfare of Hampshire's children who require adoptive placements and the importance of minimising delay for children and meeting statutory timescales. In addition, the support services that are being offered to children and adoptive family's post-adoption, which continues to be a growing area in Hampshire's adoption agency, are described.

13.4. An updated organisational structure has been provided to provided clarity regarding the various team's line management structure.

14. **Adoption Service**

- 14.1. The Statements of Purpose will drive the delivery of children's residential care and the Fostering and Adoption services during 2022-23. As required, they will be updated in one year to reflect the development of services and needs.

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:**Links to the Strategic Plan**

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	Yes
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	Yes
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	Yes
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	Yes
OR	
This proposal does not link to the Strategic Plan but, nevertheless, requires a decision because:	

Other Significant Links

Links to previous Member decisions:	
Statement of Purpose Executive Member Reports	<u>Date</u> 20/09/2020 27/03/2019 09/05/2018 19/06/2017
Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
Care Standards Act	2000
Children's Act	1989/2004
Children's Home Regulations	2015
The Fostering Services (England) Regulations	2011
The Adoption and Children Act Register Regulations	2017

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

DocumentLocation

Guide to the Children's Homes
Regulations 2015

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/childrens-homes-regulations-including-quality-standards-guide>

Fostering Services: National Minimum
Standards

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fostering-services-national-minimum-standards>

Adoption: National Minimum Standards

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/adoption-national-minimum-standards>

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

1. Equality Duty

The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

2. Equalities Impact Assessment:

The decision to approve the updated Statement of Purpose for Hampshire's Children's Homes, Fostering Service and Adoption Service will have no impact on groups with protected characteristics.

Summary of changes in Statement of Purpose from previous report

Substantive changes		
Location/service area	Change	Reference
Amani Children's Home	Quality and purpose of care – reverted to four children	P4 – 1, 1 st para
	Temporary increase from four to five (removed)	P4
	Accommodation of home – temporary conversion of staff sleep-in room to accommodate 5 th child (removed)	P6 – 3 (a) 2020 SOP
	Age range of children accommodated changed from 10-18 to 10-17	P6 – 3 (b)
	Experience and qualifications of staff	P21-22
	Organisational structure of the home	P28-30
	Staffing structure	P31
	Covid response	P32
Abenrise Children's Home	Age range of children accommodated changed from 10-18 to 10-17	P4 – 1 and P6 – 3 (b)
	Management of home	P22
	Experience and qualifications of staff	P22-23
	Organisational structure	P33
	Covid-19 response	P34
Berry View Children's Home	Appointment of Deputy Manager	P26
	Experience and qualifications of staff	P27
	Organisational structure	P36
	Staffing structure	P40
	Covid-19 response	P41

Candle Lodge Children's Home	Leadership and management refers to the manager and not registered manager	P3 18 (c)
	Staffing qualifications now shown as a separate document – Appendix A Change in management (removed)	P3
	Manager pending information removed	P4 2020 SOP
	Mission statement included	P4
	Description of accommodation offered changed from 10-18 to 10-17	P4, para 1
	Updated to reflect that homes were purpose built and include suitable space for meetings to be held	P6 3 (a)
	Age of children accommodated shown as 10-17 from 10-18 on previous SOP and accommodates four children	P6 (b)
	Includes that all HCC properties are non-smoking	P6 (c)
	Addition to the leisure facilities located nearby	P7 final sentence under 'leisure'
	Working relationship with PCSO (removed)	P7 – 3 (c) 2020 SOP
	Leisure facilities available locally updated.	P7 – 4 final para
	Contact details for information on policies	P10 – 7, last para
	Support for children with SEN – locality of schools	P12 – 10, 2 nd para
Keyworker engagement with children through keyworker sessions	P14 – 13, 2 nd para	
Annual holiday (removed)		

	<p>Children encouraged to save</p> <p>Effectiveness of homes therapeutic approaches</p> <p>Behaviour management – restorative in nature</p> <p>The home no longer has in-house Team Teach instructors</p> <p>Lead Manager details</p> <p>Staffing structure</p> <p>Induction training</p> <p>Quality Standards Leads</p> <p>Staffing qualifications</p>	<p>P16, para 5 2020 SOP</p> <p>P14, para 5</p> <p>P15 – 14 (a)</p> <p>P17, 2nd para</p> <p>P18 – 17 (b)</p> <p>P18 – 18</p> <p>P19</p> <p>P21 – para’s 3-4</p> <p>P25</p> <p>P27-28</p>
Crofton House Children’s Home	<p>The education room has been temporarily converted to staff sleep-in room (removed)</p> <p>Amount of children accommodated (maximum of 5)</p> <p>Contact name for information on policies</p> <p>Resolutions to be restorative in nature and build on social capital</p> <p>The home no longer has in-house Team Teach instructors</p>	<p>P6 – 3 (a) 2nd para 2020 SOP</p> <p>P6 – 4 (b)</p> <p>P11 – 7</p> <p>P18 – 17 (para 1)</p> <p>P20 – 19 (b)</p>
	<p>The changes to the SOP for the home include;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing urgent and extended care for children 10-17 • Children placed will benefit from a 12-week assessment process that will identify the support required to meet the children’s needs 	<p>P4</p> <p>P4</p>

Cypress Lodge Children's Home	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The home has reduced from 4 bedrooms to 2 bedrooms to support the needs of the service 	P6
Firvale Respite Children's Home	<p>Statement of range of needs (up to day before 18th birthday)</p> <p>Age range of children (changed from 'up to age 18' to 'up to age 17')</p>	<p>P4 - 1 (last para)</p> <p>P7 (b) first para</p>
Ferne Lodge Children's Home	<p>Health – Covid information</p> <p>Experience and qualifications of staff and structure of home (removed) now in Appendix 1-3 of 2021 SOP</p> <p>Appendices 1-4</p> <p>Staff sleep-in room conversion (removed)</p> <p>Type of accommodation available</p> <p>Induction training – expectations of staff</p> <p>Organisational structure of the home</p> <p>Management and staffing of home</p> <p>Supervision structure – Appendix 3</p> <p>Covid-19 response – Appendix 4</p>	<p>P3 – 14 (c)</p> <p>P3 – 19-20 2020 SOP</p> <p>P4</p> <p>P6 – 3 (a) 2nd para – 2020 SOP</p> <p>P6 – 3 (c) 1st para</p> <p>P19, penultimate para</p> <p>P23-24</p> <p>P25-26</p> <p>P27</p> <p>P28</p>
Swanwick Lodge	<p>Covid-19 added to contents list</p> <p>Update model of care</p> <p>Trauma Recovery Model</p> <p>Contact details – responsible individual updated</p> <p>Awards and qualifications through NCFE and partnership with Southampton FC (removed)</p> <p>Bullying heading (removed)</p>	<p>P2</p> <p>P3 1.1.1</p> <p>P5 – 1.3.3 to 1.3.6</p> <p>P7 – 1.4.2 2020 SOP</p> <p>P9 – 1.11 2020 SOP</p>

	Use of body-worn cameras in strict conditions	P8 – 1.11.2
	Scrutiny of physical restraint	P9 – 1.11.5
	Escape (removed) from heading of 1.12	P10 – 2020 SOP
	Joint procedure for managing incidents of absconding	P9 - 1.12.2
	Staff procedures for informing the police of absconding incidents	P9 – 1.12.3
	Admission criteria (removed) repeated information in 1.13.1	P10 – 1.13.2 2020 SOP
	The care approach adopted at Swanwick Lodge	P12 – 2.2.2
	Consequences and rewards	P12-13 - 2.2.4
	Contact details (change of manager)	P14 3.3
	Health & well-being team	P16-17 - 5.2.1 to 5.2.7
	Therapeutic techniques	P17 - 5.3.1 to 5.3.4
	Core skills and knowledge	P19 - 6.3.6
	Staff appraisals	P20 – 6.5.1
	Covid-19	P20
The Mead Children's Home	Accommodation	P - 3 (a)
	Children's feedback	P12 – 8 (last para)
	Staff training re: corporate parenting (removed from 2020 version)	P13 – 12 (3 rd para)
	Staff pagers/attack alarms (removed from 2020 version)	P18 – 16 (para 1)
	Leadership & Management	P20
	Experience and qualifications of staff	P20 - 19

	Young people's feedback on staff (removed from 2020 version)	P21 (last para)
Adoption Service	Adopt South responsibilities	P3
	Liaison with virtual schools	P3
	Adoption Support Services - updated support offer.	P5
	Adoption panels	P5
	Step Parent Adoption	P6
	Adopt South management structure updated	P9
	Highlights from 2021-2022	P9 Data updated
Fostering Service	Recruitment and Assessment of Prospective Foster Carers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Updated paragraph on team structure - Updated language used e.g. Initial home visit is now introductory visit, - Update table of recruitment and assessment process 	P3
	Service Statistics Updated	P7
	Complaints about the Fostering Service Updated data	P7
	Management structure updated	P8
	Fostering Highlights updated	P9
	Hampshire Hives	P10
	Family Connections Service	P12
	Hampshire Approach	P13

Other amendments

Location/service area	Change	Reference
Cypress Lodge	<p>The changes to the homes statement of purpose will include;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing ratio will be a minimum of 2:1 for all children people placed at the home • Staff will engage in a multi-agency approach and with Urgent and Extended Care Workers to support the children placed <p>These changes to the SOP will support placement stability for our children.</p>	

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Fostering Statement of Purpose 2022 - 2023

Aims and Objectives

Hampshire County Council's Children's Services Department manages the legal duties in relation to placing children who need to be looked after. This service is provided through the fostering service.

The service aims to meet the needs of all Hampshire's children who have been assessed as requiring a foster placement by providing a range of good quality, family-based care, for children who are unable to live with their own families.

The aims of the service are to:

- Support the development and welfare of looked after children who are placed within the service.
- Provide looked after children with a safe, stable, nurturing family experience which will promote their health, educational achievement and wellbeing, and which will assist them in coming to terms with their life experience and reaching their full potential.
- Provide different types of foster placements to meet the needs of the children being looked after, including temporary, permanent, respite including specialist respite.
- To retain a skilled group of foster carers who are able to meet the needs of children who are looked after.
- To recruit and assess quality foster carers in a consistent and transparent manner and increase number of carers to meet the needs and demands for placements.
- To offer training and support to all foster carers which will provide the necessary skills to enable them to care for looked after children and develop and enhance their potential.
- To meet the key aims of Hampshire County Council and the objectives of the Children and Young People's Plan.

Service Delivery

Children first

All work within the Fostering Service is guided by determining and acting on what is in the best interests of each child.

Placement matching

Placement matching means placing children with a family that can meet their needs. This includes considering the wishes and views of the child, the child's birth parents and significant relatives, and factors such as culture, faith and language.

Placement matching is undertaken by the Placement Commissioning Team in consultation with the area Fostering and Child Care teams.

When placing children, proximity to schools, family and friends is taken into consideration. If the most appropriate match is not available at the time of placement, a child is placed with the most appropriate carers.

Types of fostering

Fostering is a positive option for many children whose care cannot be met within their birth family. The need for care may be short term, temporary or long term. Hampshire County Council aims to provide a range of placement options to meet the needs of children who need care, including emergency placements, short term, long term, as well as managing placements with connected carers, a range of respite placements and parent and child placements.

Working together

The Fostering Service works with a range of other teams and departments to ensure good quality care for the children looked after by foster carers and support for foster carers. The Service works as partners with agencies and services in specialist fields such as children in care and children in need social workers, health and education professionals as well as with children, children's parents and wider family members.

As part of the wider directorate of Children's Services, the Fostering Service also works to develop robust policies, procedures and protocols to benefit looked after children, foster carers and others that they work with.

Marketing fostering to find new foster Carers

Hampshire County Council uses a variety of online and offline approaches to recruit a diverse range of foster carers, who can meet the needs of children in Hampshire. Hampshire County Council's insights and engagement team has provided the fostering service with research into audience profiles and feedback from current foster carers. This will help shape recruitment campaigns and messages that aim to raise awareness of fostering, drive traffic and generate leads, resulting in more foster carers. Hampshire is focusing on finding members of the public who are new to fostering to increase the overall number of placements available in Hampshire.

Recruitment and Assessment of Prospective Foster Carers

In recruiting and assessing prospective foster carers, Hampshire County Council follows the Fostering Services Regulations, (2011), Care Standards Act, (2000), The National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services as well as adhering to the good practice guidance provided by Coram British Association of Adoption and Fostering (Coram BAAF) and the Fostering Network.

The team has a recruitment stream, and an assessment stream. The recruitment stream support prospective foster carers from enquiry through to stage one. The assessment stream support prospective foster carers from the end of stage one, into stage two then through to approval.

In practice, following an initial enquiry, all prospective foster carers complete an initial application over the phone or online which is followed up with a welcome call. The fostering recruitment and assessment team offer evening and weekend calls for the convenience of prospective foster carers. Prospective foster carers are then offered an introductory visit virtually or in person at home, so they can further discuss their interest in fostering with Hampshire County Council. Prospective foster carers who meet our criteria then progress to the assessment process.

In 2022/23, to improve the experience of prospective foster carers, we are amending the assessment process, so stage one managed by the recruitment stream starts before stage two managed by the assessment stream. However, will sometimes run alongside each other to help expedite the process and avoid delay. On average the process from application takes six months, dependent on references and checks and the applicant themselves.

Makes an enquiry and sent information pack
Initial Application and welcome call
On demand support event – what happens next
Introductory visit and initial health and safety
Stage one
Prospective Foster Carer Application Form and Life events (C3)
'Skills to Foster' part one three-day training
Checks and References, including DBS
GP health assessment (Medical)
Stage two
Health and Safety visit
Assessment
'Skills to Foster' part two three-day training
Interviews with personal references
Discussion and visits with social worker (8-12 visits)

Preparation and review of written application with social worker (Form F)
Meet with Independent Fostering Panel
Decision made by Agency Decision Maker
Formal Handover to Supervising Social Worker
WELCOME TO FOSTERING

A similar process is used for those applicants who are currently with another fostering agency or authority and wish to transfer to Hampshire. On average, this process takes four months to complete.

Recruiting and approving connected carers

Connected carers identified
Home Visit
Stage 1
Checks and References
Stage 2
Assessment
Pre-approval training
Discussion and visits with social worker
Preparation and review of written application with social worker
Meet with Independent Fostering Panel
Decision made by Agency Decision Maker
Formal Handover to Supervising Social Worker
WELCOME TO FOSTERING

Approval of Foster Carers

The assessment process ends with a written report which is then read and signed by the prospective foster carers and presented to an independent fostering panel for review. Hampshire's fostering panels consist of members who have relevant personal and/ or professional experience or expertise in looking after children. They review the written report and ask relevant questions to enable them to make a recommendation.

The recommendation of the panel is sent to the Agency Decision Maker for Hampshire County Council. The Agency Decision Maker has the final decision for approval of foster carers.

On approval, a supervising social worker from the area Fostering Team is allocated to support the foster carer with their role.

Training Foster Carers

Hampshire County Council's training pathway includes all essential and developmental training. All foster carers are expected to participate in training, which is essential in undertaking the fostering task and enabling them to progress to the next skills level. They are also required to complete the Training, Support and Development Standards (TSD Standards) for foster carers.

Training is delivered by staff, foster carers and specially commissioned trainers and the programme is managed by Hampshire's Workforce Development Team. The programme included the use of e-learning and is flexible and reactive.

Social workers help create a Personal Development Plan for foster carers that provide a framework to identify carer's skills, strengths and goals, identifying any training needs along the way.

During the assessment, prospective carers attend two three-day training courses; 'Skills to Foster part one and two'. These courses focus on topics that carers need to be aware of before taking a child or young person into placement, such as paediatric first aid and safeguarding.

Supporting Foster Carers

Financial support

All foster carers receive an allowance for each child they foster, according to the age of the child. For foster carers who are able to demonstrate their skills and experience in supporting children and young people with complex needs, a skills fee is also possible. A formal panel-based skills appraisal reviews foster carers against a set of specific criteria. Any skills fees awarded are paid per child in placement. Allowances are set annually by Hampshire County Council, so they are kept in line with recommendations by The Fostering Network.

Practical support

All foster carers work with an allocated supervising social worker who has responsibility for managing and supporting them. Six-weekly supervision visits are complemented by a series of support groups, automatic membership of Hampshire's Fostering Network (other organisations are also available) and access to 'out of hours' duty services. Placement stability workers can offer intensive support to maintain the placement.

In addition to formal support, foster carers are encouraged to participate in informal support and social activities organised by other foster carers and foster carer support networks.

Reviewing Foster Carers

Formal supervision with foster carers also includes reviews of foster carers' record keeping and the outcomes they are delivering for the children in their care. The fostering Service will undertake unannounced visits to the foster home and there is a formal annual review of each fostering household. The first annual review is presented to the independent fostering Panel. Alongside this, Hampshire's procedures indicate situations in which further reviews should be undertaken, for example in the case of a serious complaint or if a change in approval is recommended.

Service Statistics

Children living in care

At the end of February 2022, there were 1,706 children in the care of Hampshire County Council. The number of children placed in foster care was 1,220.

Foster Care provision	No of children	% of HCC overall Children in Care
Connected	233	13.7%
Hampshire County Council	497	29.1%
Independent Fostering Agency	490	28.7%
Total	1220	71.5%

At February 2022, Hampshire County Council had approximately 480 registered fostering households.

Complaints about the Fostering Service

Feedback is vital to our growth and development. We take great pride in the services we provide and want to ensure we deliver a quality service to all. We welcome all feedback and deal with all comments promptly and professionally.

As part of our commitment to safeguarding, we ensure that children and young people in care and foster carers are aware of our 'Comments, Complaints and Compliments Procedure' and know how to raise concerns.

From December 2020 to December 2021 the Fostering Service received four complaints from foster carers, which were progressed under a formal complaint process.

More information about the comments, complaints and compliments process can be found by visiting: www.hants.gov.uk/childrens-services/contact-cs/cs-complaints.htm

Complaints against foster carers

All complaints against foster carers are investigated using the 'Complaints and Allegations against Foster Carers Procedure'. Emphasis is placed on resolving complaints of this nature swiftly and locally where possible.

In supporting foster carers, the Fostering service commissions FosterTalk, an Independent Fostering Support Service to aid foster carers who are subject to investigation following a complaint or allegation.

Contacting the Regulator

Ofsted is responsible for inspecting the Fostering Service. They will also receive and investigate any complaints about the Fostering Service. Significant incidents are also reported to them.

Ofsted, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD

Telephone: 0300 123 1231

Management Structure

The Fostering Service is part of Hampshire County Council’s Children’s Services Directorate.

The Head of County Services is responsible for the placement of children and fostering support. The Area Director West is responsible for fostering recruitment and assessment. Day-to-day operational management of the service is the responsibility of the Fostering Service Manager, Head of Fostering Recruitment and Team Managers.

Team Managers lead the work of social workers, and supervising social workers, children and family support workers and the administration services to support foster carers within their district.

The Fostering Service comprises of a Service Managers, Team Managers, Assistant Team Managers, Qualified Social Workers, Family Support Workers, Social Work assistants and a Marketing and Communications professionals. Administrative staff are managed external to the service.



Staff Qualifications and Experience

Team Managers and social workers all have social work qualifications to support their extensive experience in providing services for children. They are registered with Social Work England.

Children and Families support workers do not hold a professional social work qualification but have experience of working with children, young people and families gained from working with a range of services. They work under the close supervision of social workers or team managers.

All Hampshire County Council employees and contractors are subject to rigorous selection and checking prior to commencing work within their teams as set out in regulations. The recruitment process for the Fostering Service is also monitored by Ofsted.

Fostering Highlights 2021/22

Marketing, recruitment, and assessment

In 2021/2022 the Fostering Recruitment and Assessment has been part of Hampshire Modernising Placements Programme which has led to investment into the team including eight new roles and an increased to target to recruit more new foster carers.

In support of the new targets and expanding the team we created a mission for the team “to find caring, compassionate, and nurturing people within our community to start their journey to becoming skilled and engaged foster carers for Hampshire children. Our mission is underpinned by our Children Services values of: Be Our Best | Collaboration | Continuous Improvement | Openness | Respect | Trust.

In order to achieve our mission, we have created three goals for the team:

- 1) Increase the number of quality foster carers for Hampshire’s children.
- 2) Build an innovative, quality and sustainable service – one that is the “go-to” choice in Hampshire.
- 3) Grow a skilled, motivated, and proactive team underpinned with a shared mission, ownership and values.

Focusing on our recruitment funnel, we want to ensure we generate as many enquires as possible and then support them through their journey to becoming a Foster Carer, maintaining strong conversion rates. In 2021/22 we achieved:

- Secured 338 firm enquires, an increase of 33% on last year;
- Undertook 203 initial home visits, an increase of 40% on last year;
- Recruiting 33 new county carers and one home form home carer, an increase of 17% on last year.

The majority of the growth on last year was achieved in the final six months of 2021/22.

One success was our winter marketing campaign, which we put in place at what we know is a quite time for enquires – the campaign lead to a 300% increase in enquires. Another success was reducing our time from enquiry to approval by 30 days. Finally, we asked prospective carers how likely they are to recommend us to someone interested in fostering and we scored +48 on a scale of -100 to +100.

Hampshire Hives

We have introduced a new support framework for foster carers, The Hampshire Hive. This provides a network of foster carers supporting each other in small hubs with the aim to improve foster carers experience and placement stability. At February 2022 we have 8 Hampshire Hives operating across the county with plans for these to increase. We have 88 Hive households within our 8 Hives who are currently caring for 128 children and young people



Most recent Ofsted Inspection Highlights

The services last Ofsted inspection concluded an overall quality rating of 'outstanding'. This is recognition of the quality of our service provided by staff and foster carers. Inspection is the main way Ofsted check the quality of services for children and young people. The purpose of inspections is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

Report highlights include:

Tenacious and creative work is undertaken to support children to safely remain in the care of their families wherever possible. Intensive support workers demonstrate skill through their sensitive, relationship-based work with families. Thorough, well-evidenced rehabilitation assessments and plans provide a sound basis from which to support children to successfully return home when this is in their best long-term interests. Appropriate and well-balanced decisions concerning children who do come into care are informed by thoughtful and rigorous management oversight.

Social workers build consistent and important relationships with children in care. They undertake insightful direct work that is carefully tailored to children's individual needs. Social workers' verbal accounts and written records of this work powerfully convey a strong picture of children's lived experiences, and the views of their birth families, supported by ongoing life-story work to help children understand their earlier lives. Social workers record their work with children diligently and sensitively, using a personalised and straightforward style of writing that demonstrates warmth and concern.

Children's participation is active, influential and widespread. Regular surveys, activity days, digital feedback initiatives, participation conferences and the recruitment of a growing number of care ambassadors are some of the wide range of methods and approaches that are routinely used to understand how children experience their lives in care. The local authority is innovative about how it encourages participation, for example through a theatre project which promotes children's well-being and mental health through the creative arts. Lead participation champions in each district organise an array of events and forums each month through which children's views are sought, for example about the qualities of a good social worker.

Children live with carers who meet their needs well and go to great lengths to improve their outcomes. Residential care is considered where it is appropriate for older children, including the use of the highly rated children's homes managed by the local authority. Comprehensive and highly evaluative assessments of connected carers and special guardians result in appropriate and lasting arrangements for children, underpinned by strong support plans. Carers receive determined support when they are struggling with children's behaviours and this helps them overcome challenging periods and to build resilience.

Assessments of prospective foster carers and the training and support subsequently provided are of a high standard. Children are carefully matched with carers, and the support offered by their supervising social workers helps them to remain resilient and child-focused during challenging times.

For more information or to view the full report visit www.ofsted.gov.uk



Family Connections Service (Previously Connected Carers Assessment Team)

The Family Connections Service sits under the Children in Care lead, ensuring close links with Children's Teams to advise on the processes of assessing Connected Carers.

The Family Connections Service Admin support and the knowledge base of the Children and Family Support Worker (CFSW) in addition to the changes above ensure that the assessing social workers are fully supported throughout and new staff have a good level of guidance and support.

The Family Connections Service is working to improve the consistency of post SGO support to ensure that connected carers have the right support to care for children without the need for care orders where this is right for the child.

Through the Family Connections Service model, the understanding of fostering regulations and National Minimum Fostering Standards is considered across the county within Care Planning.

Fostering Support Teams

The teams continue to support both Hampshire County Carers and Connected Carers. Management has remained stable which has added to the continuity of high-quality oversight and support for foster carers.

The teams provide;

- Support to foster carers;
- Supervision to foster carers, their birth children and any other household member including children in placement;
- Provide training to approved and pre-approved foster carers;
- Manage complaints and allegations against foster carers;
- Foster carer assessments;
- Support Staying Put placements;
- Arrange foster carers for out-of-hours (OOH).

Hampshire County Council support foster carers in their day-to-day care of the children, providing; advice, emotional support, talking through issues, arranging

respite placements, liaising with the children's teams, managing payment issues, ensuring that foster carers have all the correct paperwork and know-how to complete it to ensure they comply with Fostering Regulations and meet the required standards.

The Placement Commissioning Team (PCT) ensure that identified placements will meet the needs of the child(ren), ensure that carers are supported to receive the child and liaise with the children's team to ensure that a placement planning meeting is held. The Fostering Support Teams ensure that the carer has all the practical equipment to care for the child and failing that source this for them. Foster carers can call and speak to a supervising social worker for telephone support when required and we have a duty system to facilitate this.

Annual Household reviews with foster carers are conducted. These reviews assess the past year of fostering, provide evidence to support the National Minimum Standards and make recommendations for the future. Reviews are presented to panel after the first year of fostering or after a complaint and allegation. At all other times these are authorised by the team manager. If carers continue to meet the required standards each year a new carers agreement is signed.

It is ensured that all carers have up-to-date statutory checks and additional checks to ensure the suitability of the household.

Hampshire Approach

In particular, the strengths-based approach has informed the way supervision sessions are held and the language used to address any challenges. The service has always been child-focused, and all forms are being re-written to reflect more the voice of the child.

It continues to promote and embed the Hampshire Approach in all our practice.

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Adoption Statement of Purpose 2022

Introduction

Hampshire County Council acts as an Adoption Agency to provide adoption services as required under the Adoption and Children Act 2002, the Adoption Agencies Regulations and Guidance 2013 and the Adoption National Minimum Standards (Care Standards Act 2000).

The Agency aims to fulfil its range of duties and responsibilities under the above legislation and the Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004 in meeting the needs of those children who have or may be adopted, their birth parents and those people who are or may be adoptive parents.

Principles of the Service

- Children are entitled to grow up as part of a stable and loving family, which can meet their needs through childhood and beyond. Children's birth parents and families, their adoptive parents and families will be valued and respected.
- The child's welfare and safety will be the paramount consideration and will be at the centre of Hampshire's adoption process.
- All children will have the same opportunities irrespective of gender, ethnic origin, disability, culture, religion, language and sexual orientation.
- Achieving permanence for a child will be a key consideration in working with children in need and their families and in working with any child who is looked after by Hampshire.
- Permanence can be achieved by remaining with or returning to birth parents, legal permanence with extended family, adoption or permanent placement with other than extended family through legal means.
- Delay in the adoption process can have a significant impact on the wellbeing of children and must be kept to the minimum necessary to achieve the child's best interests.
- Adoption has lifelong implications for all involved. Children and young people who have been adopted, adoptive families and birth families all have access to a range of services and supports to meet their assessed needs.
- Children have the right to be listened to, express their wishes and feelings and participate in decisions about their future. They will be encouraged and enabled to do this at all stages of the adoption process and in a way that is appropriate to their age and understanding.
- A sense of identity is important to a child's well-being. To help children develop this, their ethnic origin, cultural background, religion, language and sexual orientation need to be properly recognized and positively valued and promoted. Children will not be kept waiting for an ideal match.

Aims and Objectives of the Service

The main aims of the Hampshire County Council Adoption Service are to:-

- Provide a range of quality services which can promote best outcomes for children who need permanent placements.
- Meet and comply with the National Minimum Standards for Adoption Services.
- Adhere to permanency planning timescales as set out in adoption legislation, in order to avoid delay and maximise each child's opportunity to experience a stable and secure family life.
- Provide appropriate choice of adoptive placements via our partner Agency, Adopt South Regional Adoption Agency (RAA) for children within Hampshire County Council, and beyond where appropriate, for example through the Interagency Funding and National Searches via a provider such as Link Maker.
- Ensure that children are well prepared both practically and emotionally for a move to a new permanent family.
- Provide a comprehensive support package, including financial support where appropriate to achieve stable and successful placements.
- To work in partnership with Adopt South to provide and input into effective and efficient adoption panels to enable adoption plans for relinquished children and linkings with children to be progressed without delay.
- Ensure all staff are appropriately recruited, supervised and trained to fulfill their agency functions.
- Ensure that where possible and appropriate, siblings will be placed together and that decisions to separate siblings are made following a sibling assessment.
- Ensure that children's plans for adoption are agreed by the Agency Decision Maker to meet court timetables
- Ensure that arrangements for contact with the birth family are carefully considered and meet the individual child's needs.
- Provide independent time limited advice and support to birth parents at the point that adoption becomes the plan for the child.
- Provide an efficient and responsive assessment and counselling service for children, adopters, birth relatives and adopted adults in respect of adoption support services in conjunction with other agencies.
- To maintain effective partnership with other adoption agencies.
- To ensure that cost effective services are provided and commissioned which maximise available resources.
- To ensure that accurate and up to date records and management information is kept in relation to individual children and services and to maintain confidentiality and security of adoption records.
- Ensure service users are fully involved and consulted on service delivery and service development.
- Treat all service users with respect and without prejudice or discrimination.

Adopt South

Adopt South is a Regional Adoption Agency and was been formed through the partnership between Hampshire County Council, Isle of Wight Council, Portsmouth City Council and Southampton City Council, with support from voluntary adoption agencies, Adoption UK, Barnardos and Parents and Children Together (PACT).

It began operating as a Regional Adoption Agency on 1 April 2019 and is responsible for:

- Recruiting, assessing and approving adopters across the partnership's region.
- Matching children in need of adoptive families.
- Supporting families pre and post Adoption Order.
- Providing services for adult adoptees and birth relatives.
- Provision of Adoption Information Exchange (AIE) and direct post order contact.

Adopt South's Statement of Purpose is available on request.

Services Provided by the Adoption Service

The Adoption Service is structured into the following teams:

- Adopt South Recruitment Team – this team is responsible for the recruitment of adoptive parents.
- Assessment Team – which delivers a service for Adopt South undertakes the training and preparation of prospective adoptive parents, undertakes the prospective adoptive parents assessment and supports prospective adoptive parents through approval to placement and final Adoption Order.
- Adoption Support Team –which delivers a service for Adopt South, providing a range of support services to adoptive families

Children and young people

The service recognises that children for whom adoption is the plan and adopted children may have specific education, health and emotional needs. Every effort is made to find families who can meet a child's religious, cultural and ethnic needs and promote a child's sense of identity which is important to a child's well-being and helps them to enjoy and achieve in life.

Supporting educational attainment of vulnerable children is a priority for Hampshire and appropriate support will be identified as a matter of priority. This includes close liaison with the Virtual School.

Access to consultation with clinical psychologists is available to social workers about children and a similar consultation service is available for adoptive parents. Nurses

for Looked After Children are available to address the health needs of children throughout the adoption process.

A children's guide is available for children for whom adoption is the plan.

Recruitment, Approval, Training and Support of Prospective Adopters

The service responds within statutory timeframes to initial enquiries and assessment of prospective adoptive parents. The service recruits, prepares, assesses, trains, supports and links adoptive families with children for whom adoption is the plan.

The adoption service is open and inclusive. Prospective adopters are welcomed and are given training and support to help them understand the backgrounds and needs of children with plans for adoption and to see the situation from the child's point of view. Adopt South welcomes prospective adopters irrespective of age, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, culture, religion and disability. We recognise that children need adopters from all kinds of backgrounds and that the ability and willingness to meet a child's needs is the most important factor.

Fostering for Adoption placements with adopters are being made where this is in the best interests of the child. At the point of enquiry and assessment, prospective adopters are being offered the opportunity to explore this option.

Adopters are provided with a range of information following approval to support them in the adoption task. Support is also provided through training opportunities, access to regular consultations run by a clinical psychologist, post-approval workshops, support groups, social events, and individual support from members of the adoption service. Most support services are delivered by Adopt South though some are commissioned externally.

Adopt South provide a mentoring service for adopters and prospective adopters. All mentors are experienced adopters and are provided with specialist support and supervision.

Permanency Planning and Family Finding role

The children's adoption team manager allocates a social worker to all cases, where adoption may be an option being considered as part of childcare planning, to begin parallel planning. There are regular Matching Meetings and Family Finding Meetings where all children for whom adoption has been agreed, including those deemed 'harder to place' are discussed and plans for seeking permanent adoptive placements are formulated, monitored and reviewed.

Support to Birth Parents and Relatives

Birth parents and relatives have access to independent support and counselling. Information is given to birth parents about this service at an early point in the permanency planning process.

Adoption Support Team:

Birth records counselling, Access to adoption records and Intermediary Work: The Adoption Support Team offers a counselling service to adopted adults who are seeking information about the circumstances of their adoption.

The team provides an intermediary service to both adopted adults and birth relatives who are seeking to find a family member. This service is only available to individuals living within Hampshire County Council's boundary. Changes to legislation means that this service can be provided to descendants of deceased adoptees, if they have a "proscribed relationship".

Adoption Support Services

The Adoption Support Team provides a range of adoption support services across the region as part of Adopt South in accordance with the Adoption Support Services Regulations 2014, this includes the following:

- Access to consultations for adoptive parents who do not feel they require a full assessment.
- Access to therapeutic parenting programmes, Nurturing Attachments and Adopting Changes.
- Upon request a social worker will complete an Adoption Support Needs Assessment for eligible families.
- Adoption support plans can cover areas such as therapeutic re-parenting, life story work, identity work, understanding developmental trauma, therapy influenced activities to help build positive attachments.
- Access to Education Psychologist consultations and Video Interaction Guidance.
- Activities for adopted children provided by Groundworks Fusion.
- Duty service for information and advice for adoptive parents, children, and adults affected by adoption.
- Adoption Information Exchanges are coordinated by the Adoption Support Team, and individual support is provided to birth parents and adoptive parents to ensure the exchanges are meaningful for the children and young people.
- Support to families where there are direct contact arrangements.

Inter Country Adoption

Hampshire Adoption Agency has a service level agreement with the Inter-Country Adoption Centre, a registered voluntary adoption agency, to assess, train and prepare those people who are seeking to adopt a child from overseas. However, Hampshire Adoption Agency retains some responsibility for children entering the country from Non Hague Convention countries who require their overseas adoption to be ratified within UK legislation.

Adoption Panels

Adopt South provide and maintain all panel services and legislative requirements including approvals, linking's and plans of adoption in cases of relinquished children. Outcomes for children remain the priority for panel scheduling and development of it's members.

Step-Parent Adoption

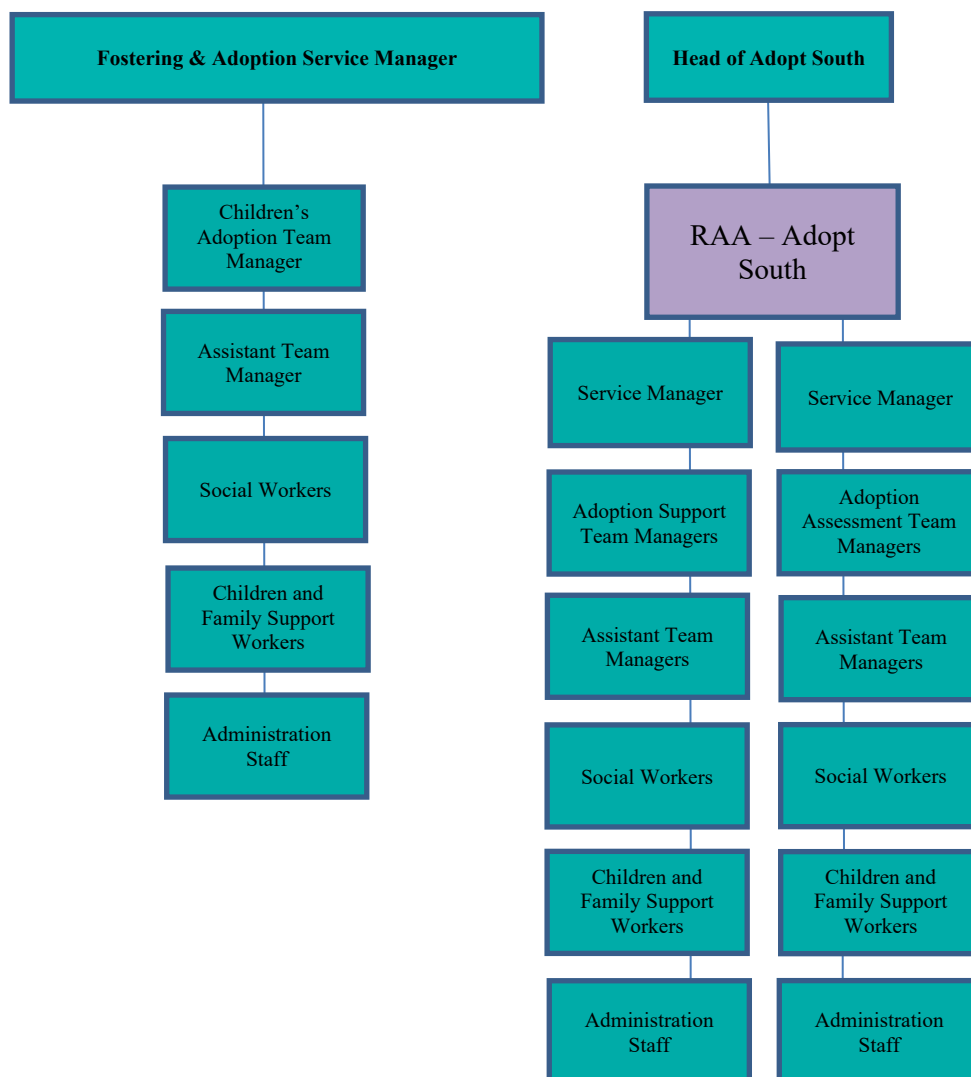
Hampshire Adoption Agency is responsible for the provision of the completion of stepparent adoption assessments for its residents and facilitates a duty services to support enquiries to better understand the legislation and legal alternatives available to them. This work now sits within the Children's Adoption Team having transferred from January 2021.

The Adoption Service Management Structure

Adoption & Fostering Service Manager
 Hampshire County Council,
 Children's Services
 Glen House, Glen Road,
 Swanwick,
 Hampshire
 SO31 7HD

E-mail: Sarah.Smith@hants.gov.uk

The Adoption & Fostering Service Manager works directly to the Head of County Services.



Monitoring and Evaluation of the Adoption Service

The Adoption Service works within the overall Quality Assurance Framework for Children and Families, which sets out a range of general and service specific standards and methods by which these standards are monitored. Children for whom adoption is being considered or who have been placed for adoption are reviewed by Independent Reviewing Officers.

Hampshire Adoption Service and Adopt South will continually monitor and evaluate its service at every stage of the adoption process to ensure quality and effectiveness. Hampshire and Adopt South welcome feedback from service users.

Feedback from prospective adopters on service quality and effectiveness is obtained via feedback sheets on adoptive parent's training and the prospective adopter report approval process. The adoption panel experience is similarly evaluated.

The Adoption Service is inspected on a 3-yearly basis by Ofsted (the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills).

Complaints

Complaints Procedure

Hampshire County Council Children's Services complaints procedure is based on Getting the Best from Complaints (Departments for Education and Skills 2006). The service is provided to service users at the point of contact.

The Complaints and Customer Relations Manager's address is:

Hampshire County Council
Children's Services Complaints Team,
Elizabeth Court 1, The Castle Winchester Hampshire SO23 8UG

Tel: 01962 847 484

Fax: 01962 834 510

e-mail: childrens.services.complaints@hants.gov.uk

The Complaints and Customer Care Manager maintains close links with the Adoption teams and monitors the process, outcomes and recommendations of all complaints. An overview looks at all complaints across the service bi-annually.

The Complaints Procedure is made up of 3 parts:

- **Stage 1 Local Resolution**
- **Stage 2 Investigation**
- **Stage 3 Review Panel**

If complainants remain unsatisfied at Stage 3 they can ask for their complaint to be examined by the Local Government Ombudsman.

Independent Reviewing Mechanism

Prospective adopters are given written information about the role of the Independent Reviewing Mechanism (IRM) as part of their preparation process. They are also provided with leaflets about the IRM when information is being prepared for presentation to panel.

Advocacy Service

Hampshire provides access to an independent and confidential advocacy service for children looked after on behalf of Hampshire County Council. The service supports young people in meetings and reviews, offers independent advice and advocacy, supports young people in making a complaint and facilitates consultation and participation of young people in matters affecting their lives. This service can be accessed via the Participation Team:

Ofsted

Hampshire County Council is inspected by Ofsted (Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills).

The Children's Services latest Ofsted inspection was judged under their new framework. The overall quality rating was '**Outstanding**'. This is a fantastic recognition of the quality of our service provided by staff and mirrors the outcome in respect of the Adoption Service from the last inspection highlighting the maintenance of the service provided to children and their families.

Inspection is the main way Ofsted check the quality of services for children and young people. The purpose of inspections is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

You can contact Ofsted to ask more about their inspection of children's services make a complaint or raise a concern about a service that Ofsted inspects or regulates, or you can view inspection reports online.

Ofsted, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD

Telephone number:
0300 123 1231

e-mail: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

Highlights from 2021-2022

Between April 2021 and March 2022, **47** children had been placed for adoption; **10** children had been placed in Fostering for Adoption Placements under Early Permanence Arrangements, **62** children's plans had been referred to the Agency Decision Maker; **60** Placement Orders and **43** Adoption Orders had been made.

Approval of the Statement of Purpose

The Statement of Purpose is reviewed and updated annually and formally approved by the Executive Lead Member.

Hampshire County Council strives to meet the requirements laid down in the Adoption Regulations and the National Minimum Standards (Department of Health) published under the Care Standards Act 2000. It also reflects the requirements as laid down under the Adoption and Children Act 2002.

The service is particularly mindful of the outcomes framework in Every Child Matters, namely: be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution and achieve economic wellbeing.

Feedback

We welcome feedback about our policies and procedures. If you have any comments about this Statement of Purpose, please address them to:

Adoption Service Manager
Hampshire County Council,
Children's Services
Glen House, Glen Road,
Swanwick,
Hampshire
SO31 7HD

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