

**Meeting:** Cabinet **Date:** 15th August 2022

**Wards affected:** All

**Report Title:** Fostering Annual Report 2022/23

**When does the decision need to be implemented?** For information.

**Cabinet Member Contact Details:** Councillor Nick Bye, Cabinet Member for Children's Services, nick.bye@torbay.gov.uk.

**Director/Divisional Director Contact Details:** Nancy Meehan, Director of Children's Services, Nancy.meehan@torbay.gov.uk.

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## 1. Purpose of Report

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- 1.1 The Fostering Annual Report sets Torbay's vision for the Fostering Service, its core principles, its key aims, main priorities and actions, the role of the Fostering Service and its various functions, the Fostering Service organisational structure, recruitment performance information, an outline of the fostering recruitment and marketing strategy and campaign, improvements in terms of foster carer support and retention, information relating to number of initial enquires received in the period of the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 to the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 and the next steps for the service.

## 2. Reason for Proposal and its benefits

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- 2.1 It is a statutory requirement established by the National Minimum Standards for Fostering for each Local Authority to produce and publish an Annual Report. This Annual Report should be considered in conjunction with the Fostering Service Statement of Purpose, required under the Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011, which is available on Torbay's fostering microsite.

- 2.2 Torbay's vision is one whereby its people are able to thrive, and our fostering community is an integral part of the service provided to our cared for children. As outlined within Torbay's Corporate Parenting Strategy, we want our cared for and care experienced young people to be safe, happy and healthy, in order that they can reach their full potential, and as corporate parents, we wish to give our cared for and care experienced children and young people the access to all of the opportunities that good parents afford their children. The dedication and commitment of our fostering families plays a critical role in how we are able to achieve this vision.

### 3. Recommendation(s) / Proposed Decision

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1. That the Fostering Annual Report 2022-23 as set out in Appendix 1 to the submitted report be approved to enable it to be published in accordance with Council's requirements.

#### Appendices

Appendix 1 Fostering Services Annual Report 2022/23

#### Background Documents

[Become a foster carer - Torbay Council](#)

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# Supporting Information

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## 1. Introduction

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- 1.1 The Fostering Annual Report provides an overview of the activity within the fostering assessment and support service in the period of the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 and the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023. It includes an executive summary, a profile of the cared for children being supported by Torbay, a review of the key priorities and actions of the service in the year 2022-23, the role of the fostering service, an overview of the organisational structure, information relating to the fostering recruitment priorities, an overview of events attended, an overview of developments in relation to fostering, an overview of Special Guardianship support, fostering family feedback and key priorities and actions for the year 2022-23.

## 2. Options under consideration

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- 2.1 No options have been considered as this proposal is for information only.

## 3. Financial Opportunities and Implications

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- 3.1 The Fostering Annual Report does not make recommendations in terms of any changes to the current service or staffing structure and therefore the decision to endorse does not carry with it any financial implications.

## 4. Legal Implications

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- 4.1 It is a statutory requirement established by the National Minimum Standards for Fostering for each Local Authority to produce and publish an Annual Report. There are no legal implications as a result of the decision to endorse this Annual Report.

## 5. Engagement and Consultation

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- 5.1 A priority of the Fostering Service has been to enhance and develop the opportunities for participation, engagement and consultation with our fostering families. Following successful implementation in the year 2021-22, a schedule of Foster Carer Workshops have continued into 2022-23, seeking the voice of foster carers in respect of a range of themes. In addition, in the year 2022-23, the fostering service in conjunction with the Learning Academy introduced quarterly thematic surveys which continue to inform service development and improvement.
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5.2 As part of the overall service, fostering families are encouraged to share their views regularly and in a variety of ways, from attendance at the quarterly Fostering Forums, through quarterly thematic surveys and through direct one to one conversations and communications with the fostering service and senior management.

## 6. Purchasing or Hiring of Goods and/or Services

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6.1 The endorsement of this Report does not involve the procurement of services, the provision of services together with the purchase or hire of goods or the carrying out of works.

## 7. Tackling Climate Change

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7.1 None.

## 8. Associated Risks

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8.1 Should this Report not be endorsed, Torbay will not be compliant with the statutory requirements in line with the National Minimum Standards for Fostering. Should the Report not be endorsed, there will no change in terms of the fundamental function of the service however the Report would not be published, and could not be transparently shared with out fostering carers which would limit the ability of the service to share learning in respect of patterns and trends, and achieve clarity with our fostering families about the priorities for improvement.

## 9. Equality Impacts - Identify the potential positive and negative impacts on specific groups

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	Positive Impact	Negative Impact & Mitigating Actions	Neutral Impact
Older or younger people	The Fostering Annual Report outlines the strengths, areas to strength and the priorities for the fostering service, in addition to the vision and strategy to enhance the local in-house provision of high quality placements for our cared for children.	N/A	N/A

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People with caring Responsibilities	The Fostering Annual Report outlines the strengths, areas to strength and the priorities for the fostering service, in addition to the vision and strategy to enhance the local in-house provision of high quality placements for our cared for children.	N/A	N/A
People with a disability	N/A	N/A	There is no differential impact.
Women or men	N/A	N/A	There is no differential impact.
People who are black or from a minority ethnic background (BME) (Please note Gypsies / Roma are within this community)	N/A	N/A	There is no differential impact.
Religion or belief (including lack of belief)	N/A	N/A	There is no differential impact.
People who are lesbian, gay or bisexual	N/A	N/A	There is no differential impact.
People who are transgendered	N/A	N/A	There is no differential impact.
People who are in a marriage or civil partnership	N/A	N/A	There is no differential impact.
Women who are pregnant / on maternity leave	N/A	N/A	There is no differential impact.
Socio-economic impacts (Including impact on child poverty issues and deprivation)	The ambition of the Fostering Annual report, particularly in respect of fostering recruitment, is to ensure that any child, no matter their level of need or their socio-economic status, has access to the highest	N/A	N/A

	quality in-house fostering provision where possible.		
Public Health impacts (How will your proposal impact on the general health of the population of Torbay)	The role of the fostering service is to ensure that all cared for children have access to the highest quality in-house fostering provision where possible; as such, the provision of this service can have a significant, positive impact on the longer term health outcomes for cared for children and care experienced young people. The provision of high quality support to fostering families also impacts positively on their emotional health.	N/A	N/A

## 10. Cumulative Council Impact

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10.1 None.

## 11. Cumulative Community Impacts

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11.1 None.

