

Cabinet – 9 November 2011

Statements of Purpose: Children's Homes

Portfolio: Councillor Rachel Andrew, Children's Services

Service: Children's Residential Services

Wards: All

Key Decision: No

Forward Plan No

1. Summary of Report

- 1.1 Walsall Council is currently registered with Ofsted to operate five children's homes. The National Minimum Standards for Children's Homes 2011 and the Children's Home (Amendment) Regulations 2011 require that the registered person of a children's home, or in the case of a local authority, the elected members, approve the Statement of Purpose for the home, and review, update and modify it where necessary, at least annually.
- 1.2 In accordance with statutory requirements an annual review of the Statements of Purpose for each of Walsall's Children's Homes was completed in August 2011. This report sets out and seeks approval for the revised Statements of Purpose for each home.

2 Recommendations

Cabinet is asked to approve the Statements of Purpose for each of the five Children's Homes operated by Walsall Council.

3 Report Detail

- 3.1 Walsall has five Children's homes each of which is registered, inspected and regulated by Ofsted in accordance with the provisions of the Care Standards Act 2000, the Children's Home (Amendment) Regulations 2011 and the National Minimum Standards for Children's Homes.
- 3.2 In accordance with the Children's Home (Amendment) Regulations 2011 (Regulation 4 Schedule 1) (**Appendix 1**) each Children's Home must have a written Statement of Purpose describing what the home sets out to do for the children it accommodates, the range of children the home accommodates and the manner in which care is provided.
- 3.3 Walsall council is currently registered with Ofsted to operate the following children's homes; Redruth Road, Eldon House, Hilton Road, Spindle Tree Rise and Lichfield Road. In accordance with statutory and regulatory

requirements of the Children's Home (Amendment) Regulations 2011 each home has compiled, kept and annually reviewed its Statement of Purpose.

- 3.4 An annual review of each of the Statements of Purpose was completed in August 2011. For the information and approval of Cabinet the following information outlines the overall purpose and function for each home and any significant changes made to the Statements of Purpose as a result of the review.

3.5 Redruth Road

Redruth Road children's home provides long term care and support for up to 4 children between the age of 8 years and under 18 years upon admission who have a disability and some of whom have complex health needs. Redruth Road can accept an emergency admission should there be a vacancy and should the needs of the resident group and any new child be compatible.

In November 2010 there was a variation to the homes statement of purpose agreed by Ofsted, to increase occupancy from 3 children to 4. As such the overall statement of purpose is now as detailed above with staffing details having also been updated to reflect leavers, new appointments and qualifications gained during the previous twelve months.

The home has commenced the introduction of Social Pedagogy as a framework for practice, the aim of which is to promote the emotional and practical development and competence of children and young people through maximising the benefits of strong and positive relationships and the provision of a range of opportunities for learning. Amendments have been made to the Statement of Purpose to reflect the development of this approach and the benefits to young people and staff.

3.6 Eldon House

Eldon House children's home provides short term break care and support for up to nine children per night who have a disability. There are 30 children aged 5 and up to the day of their 18th birthday who currently access the service. The children have varying degrees of disability with some having complex health needs. Eldon House is able to accept one emergency short term admission if necessary to ensure safeguarding and care planning for children and families where additional support needs are identified.

The overall Statement of Purpose as detailed above remains unchanged for Eldon House, however staffing details have been updated to reflect any leavers, new appointments and qualifications gained during the previous twelve months.

Eldon Plans:

Planning permission has been granted for Eldon to be rebuilt at the Alumwell site next to the Health Tech Vocational Learning Facility (previously known as Health Tech). It was proposed that the new building will be completed by 31

March 2012. However due to the complexities of procurement, the timeframe is now estimated to be May 2012. The Statement of Purpose will be updated at that time to reflect the environmental changes that will be made.

3.7 Hilton Road

Hilton Road children's home provides medium term care and support for up to 4 children between the age of 8 years and under 18 years upon admission who have complex emotional needs.

Work with the children is informed by transactional analysis, a therapeutic approach used in work with children whom have complex emotional and behavioural issues. The home also uses a restorative approach as a way of nurturing young people, positively managing conflict and reducing the potential of offending behaviour. Hilton Road can accept an emergency admission should there be a vacancy and should the needs of the resident group and any new child be compatible.

The overall Statement of Purpose as detailed above remains unchanged for Hilton Road, however staffing details have been updated to reflect any leavers, new appointments and qualifications gained during the previous twelve months.

3.8 Spindle Tree Rise

Spindle Tree Rise provides long term care and support for up to 6 children between the ages of 14 and 17 years, some of whom may have complex emotional and behavioural issues. The aim of the home is to equip young people with the practical and emotional skills necessary for successful future independent living. The home has a training flat, the purpose of which is to prepare young people for living on their own. The home also uses a restorative approach as a way of nurturing young people, positively managing conflict and reducing the potential of offending behaviour. Spindle Tree Rise can accept an emergency admission should there be a vacancy and should the needs of the resident group and any new child be compatible.

The overall Statement of Purpose as detailed above remains unchanged for Spindle Tree Rise however staffing details have been updated to reflect any leavers, new appointments and qualifications gained during the previous twelve months.

The home has commenced the introduction of Social Pedagogy as a framework for practice, the aim of which is to promote the emotional and practical development and competence of children and young people through maximising the benefits of strong and positive relationships and the provision of a range of opportunities for learning. Amendments have been made to the Statement of Purpose to reflect the development of this approach and the benefits to young people and staff.

3.9 Lichfield Road

Lichfield Road children's home is a 4 bedded local authority children's home.

It provides living accommodation, care and support to young people aged between 8 and under 18 years of age upon admission who are looked after by Walsall Council.

Lichfield Road provides medium to long term care and support for up to four children aged between the age of 8 years and under 18 years upon admission some of whom may have complex emotional and behavioural issues. Lichfield Road can accept an emergency admission should there be a vacancy only following the completion of a group risk assessment.

The home uses a restorative approaches as a way of nurturing children and young people, positively managing conflict and reducing the potential of offending behaviour.

The overall Statement of Purpose as detailed above remains unchanged for Lichfield Road, however staffing details have been updated to reflect any leavers, new appointments and qualifications gained during the previous twelve months.

The home has commenced the introduction of Social Pedagogy as a framework for practice, the aim of which is to promote the emotional and practical development and competence of children and young people through maximising the benefits of strong and positive relationships and the provision of a range of opportunities for learning. Amendments have been made to the Statement of Purpose to reflect the development of this approach and the benefits to young people and staff.

4 Council Priorities

The main objective is to provide placement stability, care and protection and to support good permanency plans for all our Looked After Children. Our key driver is to improve the life outcomes of all Looked After Children including those who are placed within our local children's homes.

Residential Services aim to provide quality care which meets and exceeds good care standards. Services are delivered in partnership with the Social Worker, Independent Review Officers and key partners including education, schools and health.

5 Risk Management

5.1 There are no identified risks arising from the proposed amendments to the Children's Homes Statements of Purpose.

5.2 Performance management

All Children's Homes are registered, inspected and regulated by Ofsted in accordance with the provision of the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Home (Amendment) Regulations 2011 and the National Minimum Standards for Children's Homes 2011.

Since Ofsted assumed regulatory responsibility for children's homes in April

2008, each of our children's homes has achieved much improved individual and overall inspection judgements. The following is a summary of achievement per team.

In February 2011	Spindle Tree Rise was rated Satisfactory
In August 2011	Hilton Road was rated Outstanding
In June 2011	Lichfield Road was rated Outstanding
In September 2011	Redruth Road was rated Outstanding
In April 2011	Eldon House was rated as Good

Failure to annually review, amend and formally approve the Children's Homes Statements of Purpose could potentially place children's Residential Services and the Authority in breach of National Minimum Standards which can affect the overall inspection judgement for the home and the performance of the Council. As an aspect of its regulatory role Ofsted has the statutory right to serve a notice on the Council if it fails to comply with any requirement. The review of the Statements of Purpose ensures that services are meeting the requirements of the National Minimum Standards and the Authority fulfils its statutory obligations.

6 Financial Implications

The financial implications for the Council in securing best possible outcomes for children living within Walsall's children's homes are considered during the annual budget setting process and are in line with the Council's medium term financial plan.

7 Legal Implications

Each of the Statements of Purpose reflects statutory and regulatory requirements, current practice and future service developments.

In accordance with statutory requirements Ofsted have been notified of the changes to the Statement of Purpose.

8 Property Implications

The National Minimum Standards for Children's Homes 2011 and the Children's Home (Amendment) Regulations 2011 place duties on service providers to ensure good premises and environmental standards. As an aspect of our overall vision to provide outstanding services for children, and having recognised that the Eldon House premises is no longer fit for purpose, a rebuild project is currently in progress at Alumwell, with the new premises being scheduled for completion in March 2012.

9 Staffing Implications

There are no specific staffing implications arising from the review of the Statements of Purpose for Children's Homes.

10 Equality Implications

Looked after Children are a vulnerable group at risk of social exclusion and poor life chances. Continued development of the Statements of Purpose for Children's Residential Services ensures a relevant range of appropriate internal placement options for looked after children and supports the focus on outcomes that form a critical part of the regulatory assessments of Children's Services by Ofsted and the objectives within the Children and Young People Plan.

This review of the Statements of Purpose for Walsall's children's homes informs and compliments the continued development and expansion of the range of placement options and services available for children and young people within Walsall and ensures that local placements are available, appropriate to current need and meet regulatory requirements. Developing and maintaining positive living environments for children and young people in residential care will have a direct impact on children's placement stability, emotional health and their educational achievement and attainment in accordance with the requirements of the Children's Act 2004. As such the Statements of Purpose reflect the Council's commitment to providing equality of opportunity for Looked after Children living within the residential care within Walsall.

11 Consultation

Ofsted, Children, Staff Group, and Finance have been consulted as an aspect of the review of the Statements of Purpose.

Background papers

Statements of Purpose Redruth Road	August 2011
Statements of Purpose Eldon House	August 2011
Statements of Purpose Hilton Road	August 2011
Statements of Purpose Spindle Tree Rise	August 2011
Statements of Purpose Lichfield Road	August 2011


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Signed:
Executive Director
Pauline Pilkington
Date: 31 October 2011



Signed:
Portfolio holder
Councillor Rachel Andrew
Date: 31 October 2011

SCHEDULE 1 MATTERS TO BE INCLUDED IN THE STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

1. A statement of the overall aims of the children's home, and the objectives to be attained with regard to children accommodated in the home.
2. A statement of the facilities and services to be provided for the children accommodated in the children's home.
3. The name and address of the registered provider, and of the registered manager if applicable.
4. The relevant qualifications and experience of the registered provider and, if applicable, the registered manager.
5. The number, relevant qualifications and experience of persons working at the children's home, and if the workers are all of one sex, a description of the means whereby the home will promote appropriate role models of both sexes.
6. The arrangements for the supervision, training and development of employees.
7. The organisational structure of the children's home.
8. The following particulars —
 - (a) the age-range, sex and numbers of children for whom it is intended that accommodation should be provided;
 - (b) whether it is intended to accommodate children who are disabled, have special needs or any other special characteristics; and
 - (c) the range of needs (other than those mentioned in sub-paragraph (b)) that the home is intended to meet.
9. Any criteria used for admission to the home, including the home's policy and procedures for emergency admissions, if the home provides for emergency admissions.
10. A description of the children's home's underlying ethos and philosophy, and where this is based on any theoretical or therapeutic model, a description of that model.
11. The arrangements made to protect and promote the health of the children accommodated at the home.
12. The arrangements for the promotion of the education of the children accommodated there, including the facilities for private study.
13. The arrangements to promote children's participation in recreational, sporting and cultural activities.
14. The arrangements made for consultation with the children accommodated about the operation of the children's home.
15. The arrangements made for promoting appropriate behavior. And for the control, restraint and discipline of children.
16. The arrangements made for child protection and to counter bullying.
17. The procedure for dealing with any incident where a child goes missing from the children's home.
18. A description of any electronic or mechanical means of surveillance of children which may be used in the children's home.
19. The fire precautions and associated emergency procedures in the children's home.
20. The arrangements for the children's religious instruction and observance.
21. The arrangements for contact between a child and his parents, relatives and friends.
22. The arrangements for dealing with complaints.
23. The type of accommodation, including the sleeping accommodation, provided, and, where applicable, how children are to be grouped, and in what circumstances they are to share bedrooms.
24. Details of any specific therapeutic techniques used in the home, and arrangements for their supervision.
25. A description of the children's home's policy in relation to anti-discriminatory practice as respects children and children's rights.