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**REPORT TO: CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES COMMITTEE ON  
4 MARCH 2020**

**SUBJECT: INSPECTION OF MORAY FOSTERING SERVICE**

**BY: CHIEF OFFICER, MORAY INTEGRATION JOINT BOARD**

**1. REASON FOR REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to invite the Committee to scrutinise and note the inspection of Moray's Fostering Service by the Care Inspectorate which was completed on 23 October 2019.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III D (6) of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to exercising the functions of the Council as Education Authority, and Social Work Authority in respect of looked after children and young people leaving care.

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 **It is recommended that the Committee scrutinises and notes the content of the inspection report into the Moray Fostering Service.**

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The Moray Fostering Service provides a fostering and family placement service for children and young people aged 0 -18 years. The service was previously registered with the Care Commission and transferred its registration to the Care Inspectorate on 1 April 2011.
- 3.2 The Council recruits, assesses, approves, supports and trains carers to provide a fostering service to a range of children throughout Moray. This includes long-term and short-term care as well as short break care.
- 3.3 The overall intention of foster care is to provide a family based alternative accommodation for children and young people who are not able to live at home.
- 3.4 This service has undergone significant change over the last 12 months due to management restructuring required due to budget savings: a new team manager from April 2019 and other new staff; and retirees of several long serving and experienced staff.

- 3.5 Alongside this a new Fostering scheme required to be introduced during spring 2019 and was launched in September 2019.
- 3.6 Significant structural and organisational changes continued across the whole of children and families social work service.
- 3.7 The evaluation from the October 2019 inspection of the Moray Fostering Service is as follows: -
- |  |              |
|--|--------------|
| • Quality of Care and Support          | 3 – Adequate |
| • Quality of Staffing                  | not assessed |
| • Quality of Management and Leadership | 3 – Adequate |
- 3.8 There is 1 requirement and 4 recommendations which reflect in part the impact of changes that have been part of the service for some period of time.

#### Requirement

The agency must ensure that quality assurance systems are robust and are used effectively in order to monitor that formal/statutory checks for foster carers are always up to date and reviewed appropriately by March 2020

#### Recommendations

1. To ensure a child centred approach is followed in all cases, the agency must provide comprehensive planning for every child and young person moving on a temporary basis to respite carer. This should involve all key individuals attending a planning meeting, and allow time for introductions to be made. In addition, the agency should, in participation with carers and young people explore alternative options to formal respite care.
2. The agency should address problematic staff relationships between and within teams to ensure good quality support for children and their families is always available.
3. The agency should ensure that the quality of reports being provided to the fostering panel is appropriately scrutinised. This will improve matching considerations and clearly highlight areas of vulnerability. The creation of a panel advisor role would support decision-making within the panel.
4. The service should devise a development plan that follows SMART principles (Specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and timely) and be regularly reviewed.

The report from the inspection in October 2019 can be viewed using the below link.

<https://www.careinspectorate.com/berengCareservices/html/reports/getPdfBlob.php?id=305808>

3.9 The improvement action plan, which has been submitted to the Care Inspectorate as part of the process and timing of inspection, is attached at **APPENDIX I**. Whilst focused on the operational detail of service improvement it is presented as part of this report to assure the committee of actions being taken and to seek support for the service during this period of change. The activity outlined in the improvement plan will be monitored through the Practice Governance Board (PGB), convened by the Chief social Work Officer to consider quality performance and risk in all aspects of social care and social work focusing on culture, systems, practices, performance, vision and leadership.

3.10 A further Inspection will be undertaken by Care Inspectorate within 12 months.

#### **4. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

**(a) Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))**

This report relates to the following within the Corporate Plan 2018-2023:

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Where life is better for everyone.

Provide a sustainable education service aiming for excellence.

The vision being that our children have better educational and social outcomes and so are better prepared for life.

Improved outcomes for those most in need of support.

Our most vulnerable young people and families are safe and nurtured.

Public and staff have confidence in all services we provide for children.

And within the Moray – 10 year Plan – LOIP.

Building a better future for our children and young people in Moray.

Raising aspirations – building a better future for children and young people in Moray.

The outcomes being that children and young people thrive; have a voice; learn; can get about; have a home; feel secure, healthy, nurtured to be supported to reach their full potential.

**(b) Policy and Legal**

The Council has responsibilities to children in need and at risk through The Looked After Children (Scotland) Regulations 2009; the Adoption and Children (Scotland) Act 2007 and the Children and Young People's (Scotland) Act 2014.

**(c) Financial implications**

There are no specific financial implications associated with this report.

**(d) Risk Implications**

There are no specific risk implications associated with this report.

**(e) Staffing Implications**

There are no specific staffing implications associated with this report.

**(f) Property**

There are no specific property implications associated with this report.

**(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact**

The focus of service delivery is designed to meet the needs of children and young people in Moray who are our most vulnerable children who have a number of complex needs.

**(h) Consultations**

The Chief Executive, Head of Integrated Children's Services (SW), Senior Human Resources Adviser, Paul Connor, Principal Accountant, Morag Smith, Senior Solicitor, Tracey Sutherland, Committee Services Officer and the Equal Opportunities Officer have been consulted in the preparation of this report and are in agreement with the content relating to their areas of responsibility.

**5. CONCLUSION**

- 5.1 The aim of this report is to provide Committee with information about the recent inspection of the fostering service.**
- 5.2 There is an improvement action plan which will address the issues within the requirement and recommendations made by the Care Inspectorate and this will be audited through the Practice Governance Board.**

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Background Papers:

Ref: