

## **Report to Corporate Parenting Board – 21<sup>st</sup> January 2019**

### **MARKETING STRATEGY FOR FOSTERING**

Following my appointment as the Acting Service Manager in May 2018 a decision was made to revamp the Fostering Recruitment Team and a new recruitment manager was appointed to establish new marketing plan that will incorporate a recruitment and retention strategy. This to be developed as a five year plan alongside corporate communication and marketing team. A dedicated team has been restructured with permanent workers with a remit of recruiting and retaining foster carers.

New Marketing Strategy - To be completed for April 2019 and new financial year. The strategy will address - Where we are now, where we want to be and how we will get there. This will involve a structured marketing campaign involving various types of campaigns (see campaigns and marketing areas outlined below).

Last year saw us introduce some new marketing initiatives. For example we have used bollards and floor stickers to promote fostering alongside our larger campaigns where we use the media both print and radio. We are aiming to localise this more targeting areas where we historically do not generate many carers. The strategy identifies the areas where we have traditionally recruited carers, which also identifies those geographical areas where we have been less successful.

The use of the screen on Kingsgate we feel opened up our marketing to a wider audience and this will be used again for our January campaign (see below).

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It is important that we have a creative and diverse approach to how we market our fostering campaigns.

New for 2019's Marketing Strategy will be the implementation of a 12 month procurement cycle – previously we needed to tender every three months and this was not cost effective and was time consuming. This new approach allows us to build good working relationship with the media agency whom we procure and we expect better outcomes.

We will be retaining the drop in events but extending these to monthly from bi-monthly. These are a simple way of prospective carers meeting with our existing foster carers and Social Workers and getting an understanding of the role of a foster carer. In 2018 these were held at the John Smith's Stadium, however we are planning for day time events as well as evenings and varying our venues. For example a day time event at Cliffe House will open the event to those with school age children and target the Shelley/Shepley and surrounding areas. In north Kirklees, we will use Oakwell Hall to target that geographical area.

Also new, will be us highlighting positive areas of what we offer our carers. For example, our Placement Support Team is an excellent selling point as to what carers can expect from us in terms of support, alongside our 'Learning and Development Pathways 2019/2020 that is available to all our carers.

Our work with external partners is integral to how we develop our marketing strategy. We will continue with our good relationships for example with the police and fire service

as well as our positive relationship with the Huddersfield Giants. We are currently trying to make connections with Huddersfield Town.

We had 22 potential Foster Families in the process as of the 31st of December and have 7 families being presented to panel in this first quarter..

**Also for 2019:**

Hudawi Event on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2019 – this is a recruitment fayre looking at the whole fostering process with workers from all areas in attendance. Event to opened Eorl Crabtree from the Giants.

In 2018 we commissioned two DVDs that are on the intranet/Kirklees Fostering pages). The carers share how fostering is open to all and there is no particular stereotype of what makes a foster carer. There is a budget for two more DVDs.

Kirklees Vacancies page – to have a permanent advert.

Continued use of social media – Facebook and Twitter.

Promoting our link with Fostering Network on website as a unique selling point.

November 22<sup>nd</sup> 2019 - Thank you Event – for our foster carers.

In May 2019 we are holding afternoon tea to celebrate those carers receiving 5 year awards.

Pop up stands (May to September). Covering lunch times to engage the public and raise awareness – situated in the Piazza in Huddersfield Town Centre, Market Place Batley and Market Place Dewsbury. There are 2-3 every month.

Display Stands – Currently in Civic Centre 1 & 3, and Libraries until the end of January – when they will move to new locations. They will move at the end of every month to a new location and the numbers of leaflets taken will be monitored.

Children's fun run in May – we are going to attend this

Various summers Events.

Fostering Fortnight - this is a national campaign that is held annually in May and celebrates fostering and numerous events will be held.

'You can Foster' this is a regional collaboration of Local Authorities sharing good practice and allowing us to pool resources to market our need for new carers.

Costa Coffee – 'drop ins' – developed and start in January 2019.

## **More detailed example of a specific marketing campaign**

### *January 2019 Fostering Recruitment / Marketing – Plus Teenagers Campaign*

- Press release focussing on teenagers and young adults leaving care, to be issued 14th January to local print media and radio. To be shared through our internal channels; Facebook, twitter, our week, Kirklees Together.
- Costa Coffee drop-ins Huddersfield Town Centre & Leeds Road (Odeon), 11-1pm 9th and 16th January 2019.
- To utilise internal communication channels to promote costa coffee drop-ins and another initiatives throughout the month.
- Poster distribution via document solutions with dates of drop-ins (when confirmed). To be sent to schools, children centres, GPs, Dentists and town halls.
- Kirklees Jobs pages (online) fostering job advert, as an ongoing post.
- West Yorkshire police have offered us space in their internal staff magazine, to create artwork and submit. To liaise with contact for sizes/dates and produce artwork accordingly.
- Google Ads via an agency, existing artwork and ads to be used. Our ads will appear when people use key words to search for us, on various google sites such as maps, google search engine and partner sites.
- Digital Adshell/High Street – Across Kirklees (these are found on bus shelters or roundabout town there is one near CC1 as you approach the steps) new designs to be created with very targeted, possibly localised messages for areas we seem to have less foster carers, Denby Dale, Skelmanthorpe, Shelley etc.
- Floor graphics with new designs to promote fostering (generic) and bollard covers to be displayed. Roundabouts with new artwork to be displayed around Kirklees, whilst sites are now limited these have been successful for us in the past.
- Kingsgate screen to be re-used with new artwork.
- We are considering a completely new initiative for us to trial, this would be to create a short (4-5mins) animated film to use across Kirklees and wider. We could use making memories as our creative, linking to artwork. These could be used on social media platforms and possibly added to our Kirklees fostering pages.

08-01-2019