

CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

23RD APRIL 2009

FIVE RIVERS ANNUAL REPORT

**MIKE CARR - EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND
LEARNING**

**GILL ROLLINGS – EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN, FAMILIES &
LEARNING**

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To provide the Corporate Parenting Board with the Annual Report of Five Rivers Project (Appendix 1), who manage and operate children's residential provision within Middlesbrough.

BACKGROUND

2. Five Rivers and Middlesbrough Council have an established Partnership that provides 11 residential places for young people in three houses.
3. The Partnership Board oversees the operation of the partnership, including contract compliance, quality assurance and financial aspects of the Partnership. (See updated remit attached at Appendix 2.)
4. The attached report provides a summary of activity and provision.

FINANCIAL, LEGAL AND WARD IMPLICATIONS

5. There are no immediate legal or financial implications arising from this report. As corporate parents, this report will be of interest to all Members.

RECOMMENDATION

6. Corporate Parenting Board is asked to advise the Executive to note the information relating to the Five Rivers Annual Report.

REASONS

7. The Council is responsible in their role as Corporate Parents for ensuring children and young people in their care receive a high quality service. The Five Rivers residential provision is a significant component of this service.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

AUTHOR: Trish Fewster, Service Manager, Specialist Services

TEL: 01642 201941

*Address: Middlesbrough Teaching and Learning Centre, Tranmere Ave, Middlesbrough
TS3 8BP*

Website: <http://www.middlesbrough.gov.uk>



**Five Rivers Project Ltd
Middlesbrough**

**Report for
Corporate Parenting
Board**

April 2009

**Report Compiled by:
Carol Perkins
Regional Manager, North East**

Introduction

This report has been produced to give the Corporate Parenting Board an overview of progress over the last 12 months. This is in addition to the quarterly reports submitted to the Partnership Board.

The report provides an update on the current situation and includes information on the young people, staffing, training, inspections and community relations. It reflects the focus on Every Child Matters as a tool to improve outcomes for young people.

The Current situation

The Children Families & Learning Department continues to work in Partnership with Five Rivers to provide a residential service for the young people of Middlesbrough.

There are three homes in Middlesbrough:

- **Fir Tree** (Marton Avenue)
Offers placements to three young people aged between 9-14 yrs on admission.
- **Holly Lodge** (Cambridge Road)
Offers placements to four young people aged between 11-16 yrs on admission.
- **Rosecroft** (Croft Avenue)
Offers placements to four young people aged between 11-16 yrs on admission. However, this home is due to change its role and function to offer short term assessments, working closely with the Family Resource Team.

All of these placements are now short to long term.

The homes have continued to be on full occupancy until recently. However, the process of changing the role and function of Rosecroft has necessitated holding some vacancies to facilitate this change. When a young person moves on for whatever reason, further referrals are considered in light of maintaining stability for children and young people. Admissions are planned over a two week period in Holly Lodge and Fir Tree. In Rosecroft, this will now be reduced to 48 hours.

The homes continue to be maintained at a high standard. The living environments created are warm, friendly, caring and provide structured boundaries for the young people, ensuring they are enabled to feel safe.

Young People

As you will be aware, Every Child Matters: Change for Children, is a tool used to measure outcomes for young people. Improving outcomes for all the young people we care for underpins the development and the work of Five Rivers. In line with good practice, we try to ensure that any movement of a young person takes place in a planned way.

Occupancy levels are as follows (reduced pending changes at Rosecroft):

Fir Tree	75%
Holly Lodge	50%
Rosecroft	50%

At present we have seven young people living in the three homes. Between April 08 and April 09, the number of young people discharged was 9:

- 5 returned Home
- 2 went into Foster Care
- 1 went to live with a relative
- 1 went into independent living

There were four admissions between April 2008 and April 2009.

In terms of placement stability:

- One young person has been in place for 2 years 2 months
- One young person has been in place for 2 years
- One young people has been in place for 1 year
- One young person has been in place for 11 months
- One young person has been in place for 9 months
- One young person has been in place for 6 months
- One young person has been in place for 1 month

Education has improved but there are still young people for whom it is difficult to secure any form of education. We continue to work in partnership Children, Families & Learning and education providers to support young people's educational placements.

Support and guidance has been given to young people and the staff teams via the Education of Children Looked After Team. However, placements within alternative education continue to be limited and the waiting time for young people being offered a placement can sometimes be lengthy

Staffing

Five Rivers currently has 30 permanent staff.

Two Managers are currently in the process of registering with Ofsted to manage Fir Tree and Holly Lodge. This has led to a vacancy for a Deputy Manager in Holly Lodge. Internal interviews for these posts will take place at the beginning of May.

Five Rivers is committed to improving its workforce and their skills by making working with children a more attractive and valuable experience. This is in line with the recommendations made in Every Child Matters and by the Children's Workforce Development Council.

Five Rivers' appraisal systems are currently being evaluated to improve our quality assurance systems in relation to staffing,

Training

Five Rivers has its own NVQ Assessment Centre and all our staff have either completed an NVQ or are working towards it. Workshops are offered to staff to facilitate learning and support their personal development. Our main aim this year continues to be to support staff in completing NVQ Levels 3 and 4.

The training programme for 2009 is currently being developed. This will include training in line with Every Child Matters and the National Minimum Standard requirements. We will also continue to ensure that all staff are trained in Health and Safety. Middlesbrough recently led on the development of a national Health and Safety Policy for Five Rivers. Five Rivers is committed to the continuing professional development of its staff to enable them to work with the many complex issues facing our young people.

Feedback from Inspections

The service is regularly monitored and evaluated by Ofsted. All three homes are subject to Ofsted Inspections and continue to come out scoring as either 'good' or 'average' services. However, the current score of 'average' for Rosecroft is being challenged. All Managers have been set the task, along with their teams, to look at improving their service with the aim of achieving a score of 'excellent' at their next inspection.

The Regulation 33 visits continue to be positive with no significant issues being raised, and the reports now cover Every Child Matters. Overall standards of care are felt to be very good. Any issues that do arise are dealt with within required time scales.

Community Relationships

Complaints from within the communities where the homes are situated have been at an all time low. This reflects the approach taken by staff in dealing with any incidents in a quick and effective manner, whether it concerns our young people or young people from the wider community. All such issues are recorded appropriately.

In the Marton Avenue area, the previous regular meetings between Five Rivers and the local Residents Association have not been taking place. Attempts have been made over the last 12 months to arrange these meetings but to no avail. However, there have been no problems in that community during that time.

Partnership Board

The Partnership Board has always been a useful tool to raise any issues and provide a forum to discuss ideas and suggestions. It has ensured that both the Council and Five Rivers are clear about what they want to achieve for the young people of Middlesbrough. However, the Partnership Board has not met since February 2008.

Five Rivers has continued to prepare quarterly reports, which have been sent to the Assistant Director for distribution to the members of the group.

Conclusion

It is important as a Partnership we work together to overcome the barriers to attainment by ensuring our young people are supported as they make the transition into adulthood. To accomplish this we work closely with Health, Education, Criminal Justice Services, Voluntary and Community Organisations.

As the Council's key partner in delivering change for children, we at Five Rivers believe we continue to achieve an effective Partnership. We have changed the service required by Middlesbrough to meet the needs of the young people. More importantly, this Partnership continues to provide an excellent service for the young people of Middlesbrough.

Carol Perkins
Regional Manager, North East
April 2009

Middlesbrough Council and Five Rivers Partnership Board

1. Aim of the Partnership Board

- 1.1 The aim of the Partnership between Middlesbrough Council and Five Rivers is to establish and work together to continuously improve residential child care services within Middlesbrough, which facilitate the best possible outcomes of children and young people receiving those services.

2. Principles of the Partnership

- 2.1 In the context of seeking to achieve the Every Child Matters outcomes for children looked after, the following principles underpin the partnership:
- consulting with and listening to children, young people and their families in order to understand their needs and take their views into account in the development of services.
 - ensuring the safety and wellbeing of children and young people in residential care.
 - ensuring that children and young people are supported in relation to education and personal development, being healthy, contributing to their community and achieving economic wellbeing.
 - delivering services in a way which values diversity.
 - promoting self esteem, dignity, good citizenship, responsibility and a sense of belonging
 - valuing and developing the workforce.

3. Composition of Partnership Board

- 3.1 Representation on the Board will need to be at a sufficiently senior level to commit resources and engage in policy development.
- 3.2 Membership of the Partnership Board is as follows:
- Assistant Director, Safeguarding, Middlesbrough Council
 - Service Manager, Specialist Services, Middlesbrough Council
 - Commissioning Manager, Middlesbrough Council
 - Chair of Middlesbrough Council Corporate Parenting Board
 - Executive Member for Children, Families & Learning
 - Regional Manager, Five Rivers

4. Remit of the Partnership Board

4.1 To monitor compliance of the contract between Middlesbrough Council and Five Rivers.

4.2 To receive:

- Rota Visitor reports and Regulation 33 visit reports;
- Ofsted reports;
- Information on complaints and compliments;
- Reports of untoward incidents;
- Activity data;
- Financial monitoring information.

4.3 To contribute to the strategic planning of residential child care provision within Middlesbrough.

4.4 To monitor achievements against performance indicators and/or quality standards.

4.5 To determine any review or revision to the service delivery model.

4.6 To produce an Annual Report for submission to Middlesbrough Council Corporate Parenting Board

5. Frequency of Board Meetings

5.1 Board meetings will be held at a minimum of quarterly intervals.

5.2 Any Board Member, Officer of Five Rivers or Officer of Middlesbrough Council may request that an extraordinary Board Meeting be convened in the event of an untoward incident, or in the event of an incident occurring which requires a collective and strategic response.

5.3 Young people resident in Middlesbrough Five Rivers accommodation, or their nominated representative, will be invited to a minimum of 2 Board Meetings per year. The views of young people will be reported to the Board as part of the Regional Manager's report.

Approved by Corporate Parenting Board, December 2002
Revised to reflect change, April 2009

Administration of the Partnership Board

1. Meetings of the Partnership Board will be arranged by the Assistant Director, Safeguarding on a quarterly basis.
2. The Regional Manager, Five Rivers, will prepare a report that addresses the issues outlined in paragraph 4.2 of the role and remit. This will be sent to the Assistant Director Safeguarding at least five days before the Partnership Board meeting.
3. The Assistant Director, Safeguarding will arrange for the Regional Manager's report to be circulated to the Members of the Board at least five days in advance meetings of the meeting.
4. The Assistant Director, Safeguarding will arrange for minutes of the meeting to be taken and circulated to members of the Board following the meeting.
5. The Regional Manager, Five Rivers, will prepare an annual report on the work of Five Rivers for submission to the Corporate Parenting Board, which will include information on the activities of the Partnership Board.