

Action Plan Update

Please provide an update in relation to the actions listed below. We have removed actions from your action plan where an update is not required at this time. We may seek an update to all actions at a later date.

The non-compliances and corresponding actions have been numbered and some re-ordered for ease of reference

Provider's response to Monitoring Report No:	MON 0020091
Name of Service Area:	Dublin South Central
Date of inspection:	10 th -12 th and 20 th October 2017
Action plan date:	March 12th 2018
Date of response:	

These requirements set out the actions that should be taken to meet the identified child care regulations and *National Standards for Foster Care*.

Theme 2: Safe and Effective Services

Standard 10 – Safeguarding and Child Protection

Major Non- Compliance

The provider is failing to meet the National Standards in the following respect:

1. Safeguarding practices were not sufficient and safety plans were not always in place to ensure the immediate safety of children.
2. Allegations and concerns were not always correctly classified, in order to ensure they received the most appropriate response.
3. Not all allegations and concerns were managed in line with Children First (2011), or the interim protocol for managing concerns and allegations of abuse or neglect against foster carers.
4. An Garda Síochána (police) vetting was not in place for all adults and young people over the age of 16 living in foster care households.
5. Some foster carers were not aware of Children First (2011) (now 2017) or safeguarding and not all foster carers received children first training.

Action required:

Under **Standard 10** you are required to ensure that:
Children and young people in foster care are protected from abuse and neglect.

Please state the actions you have taken or are planning to take:

Action 1.1

Audits were conducted in January 2018, to ensure that all required documentation was on the files of children in care and foster carer as required. This work will continue with continued auditing by the Principal Social Worker to ensure the required documentation is on file. The area is also in process of recruiting a social work team leader post to provide support to this action.

Area Response

A third Social Work Team Leader was created in fostering to allow for 3 fostering teams within the ISA. The goal is to improve governance and oversight of fostering files and service delivery.

There has been audits completed of CIC files, for example, all children in residential care were audited and this continues to be in place.

There is a plan in 2020 that Children in care files will be audited by Team leaders and

Principal Social Worker on third Thursday every month starting on 23th January 2020.

Audits of children in care files and fostering files have been completed on specific areas of practice including safeguarding visits and serious concerns and allegations. Feedback to staff has been provided on individual cases.

Update on timescale – complete & ongoing

Action 1.2

The area will ensure that in cases where assessments are in process, that safety plans are in place and documented to ensure safeguarding of children placed.

Area Response

Where there are children in placement where an allegation has been made, there is a safety plan in place. This is reviewed by PSW for Service Improvement who also currently chairs the initial and final strategy meetings regarding serious concerns and allegations.

Update on timescale – complete & ongoing

Action 2

The area will ensure that the minutes of the area review of the classification of allegations/serious welfare concerns, all documentation regarding assessments and outcomes are evidenced on both files of children in care files and the foster carers.

Area Response

The PSWs for Fostering and Service Improvement currently have oversight of all serious concerns and allegations made by children in the area. All staff have been informed for the need to have all documentation on both files. This was reviewed on 28th November where all files i.e. CIC and fostering where there was a serious concern or allegation.

Update on timescale – complete & ongoing

Action 3

A further training workshop will be organised to take place in March 2018 by the Area Manager to ensure that all Principal Social Workers and Social Work Team Leaders are aware of their obligations under the agency's interim policy relating to allegations against foster carers. New staff will also be advised of this policy at induction. This workshop with Principal Social Workers and Social Work Team Leaders will examine the classification of concerns received and also review the necessity for safety plans to be implemented and held on file.

Area Response

Workshop organised by PSW (Fostering + CiC) in March 2018. This was attended by AM, PSW and T/Ls. In 2019 a revised version of this workshop, prepared by PSW (Fostering+

CiC) and PSW for Service Improvement was delivered to T/Ls (Alternative Care), CiC Pillar, Fostering team (twice) and Child Protection Pillar.

Update on timescale - Complete

Action 4

Since the HIQA inspection in October 2017, a system has been put in place to track vetting for anyone over 16 years old in foster carer households. Vetting applications have been sent to all identified over 16's and adults in foster carer households in the area and vetting is in process of being completed. The tracking system will be monitored on a monthly basis and will be supervised by the Principal Social Worker for fostering.

Area Response

The system in place relies on reviewing the members of the FC's household who require GV though the supervision of FCs. There is specific question on supervision form, and it is also raised at the FC review. This was reviewed periodically by the PSW (Fostering), and reminders on FC household members turning 16 were issued to relevant FSWs. The overall system was reviewed by PSW, Fostering Administrator and Business Support Manager on 5th December 2019. A decision was made to separate out the tracker so as to create a specific one for household members and 16 and 17 year olds to be completed by January 2020. This was completed on 14th January and at that point it identified that for 10 household members in 9 households the GV was out of date.

The monthly system for alerting FSWs, some 4 months in advance has been re—instituted. This will allow for closer and more effective oversight going forward into 2020.

Update on timescale - Complete

Action 5

The area will continue to hold further Children First training workshops throughout 2018 as part of the foster carer training calendar. The newly approved social care leader post for fostering will coordinate this training schedule when appointed to post.

Area Response

The first SCL for Fostering was appointed on 10/09/2018 and a second SCL on 08/05/2019.

CF training workshops were facilitated on 12/09/2018, 06/03/2019 & 27/11/2019. These were attended as follows:

- 12/09/2018; 13 individuals attended
- 06/03/2019; 4 individuals attended
- 27/11/2019; 8 individuals attended

Further CF workshops are being facilitated in April & October 2020. Dates being finalised within next week.

SCL also provided some direct one to one support to newly approved ES36 FC (via Induction/socialisation visit) in completing the CF online training. An additional 9 FCs were

provided CF training this way. The SCLs will also track those who have indicated they will attend workshop to ensure completion.

In a recent review of CF training, it became clear that about 200 FCs have still not received the training. This issue was also identified amongst all areas at the DML regional Alternative Care Forum held in December 2019. Part of the identified DSC response to this will be to assign one of the SCLs to provide individual training in the home, utilising the online facility, to FCs.

Update on timescale - Ongoing

Standard 14b: Assessment and approval of relative foster carers
Major Non-compliance

The provider is failing to meet the National Standards in the following respect:

1. The area had not been successful at bringing 30 of the relative assessments outstanding at the time of the 2016 inspection to a conclusion.

NB: In the March 2019 inspection HIQA was advised that seven of these were outstanding in March 2019. Provide update on these 7 relative assessments. 2. Children remained with foster carers that had been assessed as unsuitable carers due to concerns and risks. 3. The procedures in place to ensure that emergency placements with relative foster carers were safe were not always sufficient and there were delays in child protection and Garda checks.

4. Not all relative foster carer's assessments were completed in a timely manner.

Action required:

Under **Standard 14(b)** you are required to ensure that:

Relatives who apply, or are requested to apply, to care for a child or young person under Section 36(1) (d) of the Child Care Act, 1991 participate in a comprehensive assessment of their ability to care for the child or young person and are formally approved by the health board*.

Please state the actions you have taken or are planning to take:

Area Response

Action 1

The Area Manager and Principal Social worker will continue to meet regularly to review progress on each of these remaining relative assessments. The fostering Principal Social Worker is also meeting the fostering Team Leaders weekly to review each assessment and outstanding documentation to ensure that the above timeframes will be met.

Area Response

During 2018, when S36 assessments were being completed by FSWs on team, the PSW met regularly with FTLs to review progress. In addition to that PSW met with private providers on a monthly basis to monitor progress. DSC since late 2018 have utilised service of 2 private providers only. Capacity within the private providers remains a challenge and the area has decided to allocate S36 relative assessments once more within the fostering teams to increase capacity and compliance with timeframes set out in the standards. The PSW has identified 2 members of the fostering team DSC who will re-commence these assessments along with the Area utilising private providers.

Update on timescale – Ongoing

Action 2.1

The Area has since commissioned comprehensive psychological assessments for a small number of relative placements which were previously assessed as not suitable. This work has commenced and the psychological reviews will specifically look at the capacity and strengths of these placements to meet the children's needs and also the possible impact on children if they were to be removed. Interim letters/ reports have been requested by the end of March 2018 to present to the Foster care committee.

Area Response

The psychological assessments supported commencing or continuing with the fostering assessment in three cases. In the two cases where the psychological assessment supported continuing the assessment, they have now been approved by FCC – one in April 2018 and the other in August 2018. In the third case the psychological assessment supported the private arrangement becoming a foster placement and the applicant was emergency approved as a FC in December 2018. The fostering assessment is now almost complete, and the pack is due to get to FCC in February 2020.

Update on timescale - Complete

Action 2.2

Further safeguarding visits to all children, placed with relatives, who have not received approval to date, will be completed by the end of March 2018 and on a monthly basis (or more if required) until approval is received from the Foster Care Committee.

Area Response

A database has been set up in the area to review the completion of safeguarding visits where a serious concern and/or allegation has been made.

A review of safeguarding visits has been completed by PSW for Service Improvement

Update on timescale – ongoing

Action 3

*Formally known as Health Boards at time of writing Standards, now known as the Child and Family Agency (Tusla)

The Area has a tracking system of all Area checks completed in respect of all emergency placements and also for Garda vetting for emergency placements. This is in place and is monitored monthly by the Principal Social Worker.

Area Response

For the period up to October 2019, the PSW ensured that no emergency approval was granted without Area Clearances and Garda vetting of FCs, and relevant house hold members being in place. The system was robustly reviewed since October 2019 to ensure that emergency approvals were carried out in a far timelier manner, but also with a greater degree of consistency. The system has been centralised so that virtually all emergency assessments are carried out by the one FSW, supported by a SCL.

Update on timescale - Complete

Action 4

The Area has commissioned a private fostering service to ensure that any new relative assessment is completed within the timeframes as per the national fostering standards. The Principal Social Worker and fostering Team Leaders have factored in the necessity to review and provide quality assurance feedback to all commissioned private fostering relative assessments prior to submission to the Foster Care Committee.

Area Response

Initially the area had one private provider, but discontinued that service and now has two private providers carrying out assessments. From March 2018 to date 16 S36 assessments undertaken by private providers have been approved by FCC. Furthermore 11 assessments carried by DSC FSWs were also approved by FCC. This gives a total of 27 S36 assessments approved by FCC. While the Area and the private providers have not kept within the prescribed timeframes, each assessment carried out by a private provider is reviewed by an Area FTL, with feedback being provided, before it is presented to FCC.

Update on timescale – Complete and Ongoing.

Standard 15: Supervision and support
Major Non-compliance

The provider is failing to meet the National Standards in the following respect:

1. The frequency of home visits to foster carers was not always adequate or in line with national policy.
2. There was no programme of support groups for foster carers provided by the area.
3. Not all foster carer's received adequate support from their link worker or the duty system.

Action required:

Under **Standard 15** you are required to ensure that:

Approved foster carers are supervised by a professionally qualified social worker. This person, known as the link worker, ensures that foster carers have access to the information, advice and professional support necessary to enable them to provide high quality care.

Please state the actions you have taken or are planning to take:

Area Response

Action 1

As per action one, additional posts (Social Work Team Leader and Social Care Leader) have been approved for the fostering service in order to increase resources available. The frequency of formally recorded supervision and support visits for all carers will be a minimum of every 6 months. Visits by also be arranged by duty fostering service to foster carers who do not have an allocated link social worker.

Area Response

A full-time FTL was appointed in August 2018, and a third team created. In addition, in February 2018, an 0.6FTL recruited on an agency basis was appointed. The initial focus of this role was to lead out on FC Reviews, and Exit interviews. With the FC reviews now largely in order, the focus shifted in Q4, 2019 to lead out on ensuring FC disruptions were managed effectively from initial strategy meetings to report to FCC.

The first SCL was appointed on 10th September 2018, and second started on 10th September 2019. SCLs also provided some direct one to one support to newly approved ES36 FC (via Induction/socialisation visit) in completing the CF online training & track those who have indicated they will attend workshop to ensure completion. Also SCLs assisted in doing visits to the few unallocated FCs during 2019.

Almost all FCs with children under 18 were allocated in 2019, the frequency of support visits was, in many cases, well above the twice yearly minimum, and was set at every 8 weeks for the unapproved FCs. In addition, (see also Standard 17, action 2 below), a major focus of 2019 was embedding the practice of supervision of FCs within the team.

Ongoing review of this has shown that by Q3 in 2019 this had really taken off within the team. Only very few, for specific reasons, FCs of children under 18 have not had a supervision session in 2019, while the vast majority have had two or more sessions.

Update on timescale – Complete and ongoing

Action 2

Support groups for foster carers will be established in area by Quarter 3 2018. The Social Care Leader post approved by the Regional Service Director for the fostering service will specifically develop these support groups. Recruitment process for this post to take place during first Quarter 2018.

Area Response

Concerning the establishment of the support groups in the area, two focus groups were held with a selection of foster carers from across DSC on 27/11/2018 & 10/12/2018, with the purpose of informing the set up and rollout of a 2019 calendar for support groups meetings open to all FCs in DSC.

Support group meetings were held at the start of each calendar month in 2019 on a Monday evening from 7:30pm until 9:30pm and again on a Tuesday morning from 10:30am until 12:30pm.

The average number attending the morning session was 11 with a maximum of 16. The average number attending the evening session was much lower at 3, with a maximum of 7.

FCs were sent a list of dates for support group meetings in advance as well as a text alert closer to the meeting date. The groups took a break for the summer months – July & August as often FCs are away on holiday.

Groups were held in the Spa Hotel in Lucan which is a comfortable venue with parking and accessible to those on public transport.

A leaflet was designed about the availability of support groups in the area and is included in all induction packs to newly approved FCS in the area.

Update on timescale - Complete

Action 3

The Area is to review the quality of its social work supervision and support visits to its foster carers, both allocated and unallocated. The Area Manager and Principal Social Worker for fostering will seek assistance from Tusla's regional Workforce Learning Development unit to provide training in respect of the quality of the fostering service's support and training to foster carers. This action will take place by June 2018.

Area Response

An Audit of 33 foster carer supervision files was carried out by a Fostering Team Leader Dec 2018 and report completed Jan 2019.

A training event was prepared by the FTL and Fostering Social Work Senior Practitioner .

27/02/2019 – A practice workshop was completed with all fostering social workers on Supervision of Foster carers. From this workshop a small working party was established to review policy and make decisions on practice going forward.

07/11/2019 - The working party delivered their report to the full team on supervision practice and methodology going forward to ensure that area is in line with agreed policy nationally.

Update on timescale - Complete

Standard 17: Reviews of foster carers

Major Non-compliance

The provider is failing to meet the National Standards in the following respect:

1. Reviews were not always carried out when there was an allegation made against the foster carers.
2. Reviews were not comprehensive and were not in line with National Standards.
3. The foster care committee was not notified of all standard reviews of foster carers in line with Standards.
4. The foster care committee was not notified of all reviews following a serious welfare concern or allegation.
5. Foster carers did not receive a copy of their review report when it was completed.

Action required:

Under **Standard 17** you are required to ensure that:

Foster carers participate in regular reviews of their continuing capacity to provide high quality care and to assist with the identification of gaps in the fostering service.

Please state the actions you have taken or are planning to take:

Area Response

Action 1

The Area will prioritise all foster carers for review where a founded allegation or serious welfare concern has taken place. No additional children will be placed until a foster care review takes place and is submitted to the foster care committee.

Additional safeguarding visits will also take place to children placed in foster placements where confirmed allegations or serious concerns have taken place. Additionally, any child who has retracted an allegation or concern whilst placed in foster care will receive additional safeguarding visits.

Area Response

The numbers of founded allegations against Tusla FCs where the child, or other children in placement, is as follows: – 0 (allegations) and 5 (SCs). Of these, 2 are currently under appeal, and in the other 3 there are no children in the placement, and the FCs career in fostering has ended. Additional safe guarding visits happened both with FCs where confirmed allegations or SCs were established and where child retracted allegation until reviewed at later strategy meeting.

This will be reviewed at final strategy meeting where it is considered if safety plan needs to remain in place.

Update on timescale – Complete/Ongoing

Action 2

A training/quality assurance workshop will be held for the fostering service by the end of April 2018 to ensure that the standard of foster care reviews is of a comprehensive nature as well as ensuring reports are quality checked prior to presentation to the Foster Care Committee.

Area Response

In April 2019, FTL, with lead on FC Reviews, met with FFC Chair to review the report format and added significantly more prompts. This was designed to improve the quality of reports, assist new workers in learning the process, and increase readability and comprehensiveness of the final report. An FTL from DSW/KWW also had input into this. In November 2019, a Review training, delivered by FTL with lead for FC Reviews, was held targeting new workers but also attended by other social worker on the team. Finally, as standard practice, all reports are read and checked before submission to the FCC by a FTL.

Update on timescale - Complete

Action 3

The Area will ensure that all foster care reviews which take place are notified to the Foster Care Committee.

Area Response

All reviews are notified to FCC once review documentation is fully complete. Agreed practice is to send on the review documentation as soon as is practicable after the review

meeting has been completed. This can be within days unless there are delays linked to documents outstanding. Delays can occur if there is difficulty in securing Garda vetting or medical reports. Sometimes CIC SW reports are outstanding for a short time.

Update on timescale - Complete

Action 4

The Foster care committee is to be notified by the area of all reviews which take place following a serious concern or allegation. In particular, where there is a founded allegation or serious welfare concern these reviews will be prioritised for presentation to the Foster Care Committee. This will be done retrospectively for all such reviews which have taken place during 2017 as well as 2018.

Area Response

As indicated in the response to Art 17, Action 1 there were no Tusla FCs where a founded outcome lead to subsequent FC Review as the outcomes are under appeal or the FCs ended their career as FCs. In the case of the other Tusla FCs, where the allegation or serious concern was deemed unfounded, 8 had a FC review after the allegation or serious concern, and 5 of these have gone to FCC. Four ceased as FCs, rendering FC review unnecessary. The plan is for the remaining two to have a FC Review prioritised for Q1 , 2020.

Update on timescale - Complete

Action 5

The fostering Team Leaders will ensure that all foster carers receive a copy of their review report when completed. Foster carers who have had a review during 2017 and also into 2018 will receive, as a standard practice and also as a courtesy, a copy of their review report.

Area Response

The area is ensuring that all FCs who have had a review completed during 2019 receive a copy of their review report, and that for 2020 this will be a standard action. The Supervision agenda document will be amended to include FC having copy of last FC review as item to be checked.

Update on timescale - Ongoing

Theme 4: Leadership, Governance and Management

Standard 23: The Foster Care Committee

Major Non-compliance

The provider is failing to meet the National Standards in the following respect:

1. The foster care committee did not have sufficient oversight of the foster care service.
2. The majority of notifications of allegations and serious incidents reviewed were not made to the foster care committee in line with policy.
3. Disruption reports were not notified to the foster care committee.
4. There was no system in place to track notification of breaches to the foster care committee.

Action required:

Under **Standard 23** you are required to ensure that: Health boards[†] have foster care committees to make recommendations regarding foster care applications and approve long-term placements. The committees contribute to the development of health boards policies, procedures and practice.

Please state the actions you have taken or are planning to take:

Area Response

Action 1

A new additional 0.5 Principal Social Worker post has been approved for the Foster Care Committee. This will mean that this post will be directly line managed by the Area Manager and be part of the wider area management team. This will support better coordination, information sharing and governance. This post will be filled by May 2018

Area Response

An 0.5 PSW was appointed as FCC chair in July 2018. In November 2019 another 0.5 PSW was appointed as FCC chair reflecting a decision to have an FCC for each area – DSC and DSW/KWW. Work is ongoing in separating out the two FCCs and it is planned that the FCC for DSC will commence in March 2020. This PSW will report to AM for DSC, and be part of DSC senior management team. This new structure demonstrates a strong commitment from the SD, DML and the AM, DSC to ensure the proper foundations are put in place in DSC to ensure far better governance, coordination, learning and information sharing.

Update on timescale - complete

[†] Formally known as Health Boards at time of writing Standards, now known as the Child and Family Agency (Tusla)

Action 2

Since 2015, the area has a database for all allegations and serious welfare concerns received in respect of foster care placements.

The fostering Team Leaders will ensure that all documentation in relation to each of the meetings which reviewed allegations will be submitted to the Foster Care Committee.

The area has established a quarterly governance meeting to ensure that any allegations or serious welfare concern relating to a foster carer are reviewed by the management team.

Area Response

The area has established a quarterly governance meeting to ensure that any allegations or serious welfare concern relating to a foster carer are reviewed by the management team. The Allegations and SC Governance Group in DSC meets quarterly since mid-2018. It is chaired by AM, with PSWs Fostering and CIC, FTLs and includes external members such as representative from Tusla QA and FCC chair. Since 2019, the PSW for Service Improvement also attends. The DSC tracker is reviewed, along with all new cases from the previous quarter, with a particular focus being on thresholds and notification and final report to FCC.

Update on timescale - Complete

Action 3

The Principal Social Worker for the area will review all disruptions which have taken place since 2016 to ensure that reports are submitted to the Foster Care Committee in respect of each disruption.

A review of all disruptions which have taken place since 2016 will be undertaken by the Principal Social Worker with the fostering Team Leaders to ensure that disruption reports are submitted to the Foster Care Committee during the second half of 2018 (from June to December 2018). An additional social work Team Leader post for fostering is being recruited to specifically address this action under the action plan.

Area Response

Disruption data including private providers for 2019 collated. FTL (AMcG) has taken responsibility (since Nov 2019) for managing the processes around disruptions to ensure that DSC is compliant with requirements under regulations. This FTL is also ensuring that for all disruptions since January 2019 that a letter will issue advising FCC of the disruption and that a disruption report will follow.

The completion of quality reports to assist agency learning will also be addressed in Q1 of 2020. Meeting with FCC Chairs (JC and GMcC) planned for 15/01/2020 to review templates and create better guidance for TL completing the report. FTL (AMcG) to attend all disruption meetings where feasible going forward.

Update on timescale - Complete

4. The Principal Social Worker for fostering for the Area is to establish a tracking system to notify all breaches to the Foster Care Committee. A review of all breaches is to take place and notified to FCC by end of May 2018.

Area Response

All breaches identified were notified to FCC in January 2019, and this notification was acknowledged in February 2019(see also St. 21, action 2 and 3 below). PSW is reviewing existing FCs to identify any breaches, not previously notified, to FCC, and will complete this by 31st January 2020, and notify FCC after that.

Update on timescale - Ongoing

Theme 5: Use of Resources

Standard 21: Recruitment and retention of an appropriate range of foster carers

Major Non-compliance

The provider is failing to meet the National Standards in the following respect:

1. The recruitment and retention strategy was not effective.
2. Twenty-six foster care households were providing placements outside of their approval status.
3. The number of unrelated children living in seven foster care households exceeded the maximum number set by the National Standards.
4. Exit interviews remained absent, contrary to the service's 2016 inspection action plan.

Action required:

Under **Standard 21** you are required to ensure that:

Health boards[‡] are actively involved in recruiting and retaining an appropriate range of foster carers to meet the diverse needs of the children and young people in their care.

Please state the actions you have taken or are planning to take:

Area Response

Action 1.1

The area has a written recruitment and retention strategy. A fostering forum for new communities is in place and have held three meetings to date and will continue to meet during 2018.

Area Response

The core of the Area's recruitment strategy involved building up structure of team with 3 T/Ls and adequate number of FSWs. This approach has ensured FSWs feel supported to do their work and ultimately stay. This has allowed Area to keep virtually all FCs allocated during 2019. In addition, 2 SCLs appointed to focus on training, support groups etc
The key strands of retention policy include the following:

- Allocation of FCs
- FC reviews held – allows identification of training, supports etc

[‡] Formally known as Health Boards at time of writing Standards, now known as the Child and Family Agency (Tusla)

- Supervision of FCs
- Support Groups
- Enhanced training—increase in range of topics, special 2-day trauma training.
- Visit to FCs once emergency approved by SCL to induct/socialise FCs into role, emphasise need for ongoing training (especially foundations for Fostering), and encourage attendance at support groups.

Update on timescale - complete

Action 1.2

A fostering recruitment campaign is in the process of taking place both at local and regional level to coincide with the Irish Foster Care Association (IFCA) fostering awareness fortnight.

Area Response

The Area actions on this were closely coordinated with overall DML and national campaign. For 2018 see below. In 2019 a coffee morning was held in Ballyfermot with experienced FCs present to talk with those who dropped in. The national campaign had much more energy and buzz about it this year, with quite a high media profile across all key media outlets.

Update on timescale – complete & ongoing

Action 1.3

A national working group will be established to facilitate the development of a national plan relating to recruitment of foster carers. The first meeting of this group is scheduled for March 2018 and will be chaired by the DML Service Director. Dublin South Central, as part of the local fostering recruitment campaign, will be posting leaflets to approximately 30,000 households, in addition to on-going local newspaper adverts for the coming 12 month period.

Area Response

In and during 2018 there was an ongoing advert in a local newspaper and a leaflet drop in a few targeted estates to west and south of Area. The impact of both was unfortunately virtually zero. This probably goes to show that for a Dublin Area like DSC the national campaigns, when they are effective, buzzy and generate traction, are probably more successful in generating fostering inquiries.

Update on timescale – complete & ongoing

Action 2

The identified 26 foster households offering placements outside their approval status will be reviewed by the area Principal Social Worker to ensure that the Foster Care Committee is aware of this information. In addition, a review of their approval status will take place as part of the on-going process of foster care reviews in the area.

Area Response

These were notified to FCC in January 2019 with 29 identified cases on the list. For 28 of these the issue was that the L/T match had not been completed. By end of 2019 – 13 had the L/T match approved by FCC, a further 6 were no longer applicable due to child turning 18 years or leaving the placement. Another 1 is before the FCC in January 2020, and another is due to go to FCC in February as FC Review held in early January 2020, and is recommending the FCC approve the L/T match. For just 1 FC the issue was that the child placed was older than allowed for in FCC approval. This was resolved through FC Review submission to FCC in May 2019 where change to approval status of FCs agreed. 2 are temporarily stalled, due to ongoing appeal against a founded SC and ongoing transition plan to be ultimately decided on in court in March 2020. 5 of others still outstanding, and PSW seeking an update plan to complete L/T match here

Update on timescale – complete & ongoing

Action 3

A review will take place of the 7 foster placements identified in the inspection whereby the number of children placed exceeds National standards. Findings of this review will be brought to the Area Manager by the Principal Social Worker for discussion of a plan to address this breach of standards.

Area Response

By the time FCC notified in January 2019 of this there were only 4 remaining on list. The 3 others had come off as child either left placement or turned 18 years. The PSW, in discussion with AM, was clear that these placements had to be supported and it would not be child centred to move any of the children. Shortly after this in another placement the child turned 18. The plan for the remaining 3 was to hold a FC Review and or do L/T match and, if appropriate, seek FCC approval for the arrangement. With 2 L/T match was approved by FCC in May and June 2019 respectively. The final one will have L/T match approved in context of FC review submission. The FC Review was held on 10th January 2020, is recommending approval for the 4 children placed and is due to get to FCC in February 2020.

Update on timescale - complete

Action 4

Exit interviews with foster carers are in process of taking place. The Area Manager has provided a questionnaire and analysis report template Principal Social Worker for completion of these exit interviews for all foster carers who ceased fostering during 2016 and 2017. This is currently being actioned.

Area Response

A total of 13 FC were approached to do interviews of whom 7 did interview. A report on this, highlighting key learning, was completed by FTL in July 2018. This was then passed to AM and PSW. The report was discussed at both the Fostering and CIC team meeting in Q4 of 2018.

A new round of exit interviews has commenced with 3 FCs interviewed out of 9 FCs approached. There is a comprehensive list of a further 18 FCs who have exited from DSC. The FTL plans to offer interviews to these in the next week, and then interview those who

are willing to do this. The target date for a summary report on the findings is by end of April 2020.

Update on timescale - complete