



DERBY CITY COUNCIL

Corporate Parenting Sub Board
29 April 2014

ITEM 7

Report of the Strategic Director of Children and Young People (CYPD)

Adoption and Post Adoption Support Update

SUMMARY

- 1.1 This is an update report on the work of adoption and post adoption support and the improvement plans for 2014 - 2015
- 1.2 A project management approach has being utilised during 2013 - 2014 to deliver improvements in the adoption service and appendix two outlines the end of year project report. This approach will be utilised in 2014 to 2015.
- 1.3 The Council received an Adoption Reform Grant of £1.108m in 2013 to 2014 which supported the improvement plans and for 2014 to 2015 this grant is £238,742.
- 1.4 Information on current adoption statistics is found at 4.7

RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 To note the contents of this report including work to date and future actions.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 Securing permanency for children and young people is a priority area for Children in Care both in terms of achieving improved outcomes for individual children and young people and also in relation to cost and quality of their care.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 4.1 The adoption reform grant for 2014 to 2015 is £238,742 which is a non-ring fenced grant. This is part of a national reform programme which includes the recruitment and assessment of prospective adopters and the National Gateway for Adoption. Work is currently underway to prioritise the areas for improvement that will benefit from the grant and this work builds on the adoption improvement project started in 2013.
- 4.2 The Adoption Project for 2013 to 2014 was a complex project aimed at delivering 28 different outputs in respect of 10 objectives. The project has succeeded in fully delivering 15 of its outputs, with a further 7 partially delivered and 6 not delivered. Of the 6 outputs not delivered, 2 were no longer needed by the end of the project. Appendix two outlines the end of year project report.

- 4.3 The aims of the Adoption Project were to:
- i) Implement the changes to the Adoption Service required under the Government's Action Plan for Adoption: Tackling Delay.
 - ii) Implement the recommendations of the diagnostic assessment carried out on the Adoption Service in June 2013.
- 4.4 The project had 2 overall objectives:
- i) To increase the number of people in Derby coming forward to adopt children.
 - ii) To improve the speed, quality and effectiveness of the Council's Adoption Service.
- and 4 critical success factors:
- Improvements in the marketing of adoption
 - An increase in the number of approved adopters
 - A faster service for taking potential adopters through the approval process
 - More children moving to adoption and doing so more quickly
- 4.5 The work successfully completed under the marketing work streams led by the Commissioning Team should support the Council's goal to recruit more adopters. The benefits of this work will be seen from 2014/15 onwards. Likewise the work streams contributing to the improved effectiveness of the service should also start to yield results from 2014/15 onwards. However, in both cases this will be dependent on successfully embedding the new processes and policies into the work of the service and further work to complete some work streams.
- 4.6 Part of the work focus for 2014 to 2015 will incorporate a review of the fostering and adoption team structures and functions to ensure that capacity is located where required and identify if there are training functions that could be more closely aligned across fostering and adoption. It is anticipated that the consultancy iMPower will work with the service on this.
- 4.7 Adoption Performance in the year from 1 April 2013 to 31 March 2014 is:
- Number of adoption orders granted is 46
 - Number of placed children is 48
 - Number of matched children but not yet placed is 1
 - Number of adoptive families approved in the last year is 28
 - Number of adopters previously approved and waiting for a match is 13
 - Number of current adopter assessments underway is 18
 - Number of children whose plan is for adoption is 45 of whom only 22 are subject to family-finding: (eight do not yet have placement order and some have had plans changed). This translates into requiring 18 adoptive families
- 4.8 The outcomes from the adoption project will contribute to children achieving permanency without delay and increasing the number of adopters. This will have a positive impact on Derby's adoption scorecard in particular the length of wait.

- 4.9 The post adoption service has continued to provide letter box exchange, independent support to birth relatives, services to adopted adults, a young people's group and the assessment of support needs to adoptive families.
- 4.10 There have been substantial changes within the team due to the manager retiring, a part time SW retiring and a full time SW resigning. We have successfully recruited to two full time SW posts commencing May 2014. To cover the team manager role on a temporary basis the professional adviser to the adoption panel has increased her hours. This will cover the statutory requirement for a named Adoption Support Services Adviser.
- 4.11 The development of the post adoption service will be responsive to impending changes in statutory guidance and regulations and this will form a key part of the 2014 to 2105 improvement plan

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 None considered at this time

This report has been approved by the following officers:

Legal officer Financial officer Human Resources officer Service Director(s) Other(s)	None Mark Wyld None Hazel Lymbery: Director of Specialist Services Rod Jones: Head of CiC Regulated Services Sally Penrose: DHOS Fostering and Adoption
For more information contact: Background papers: List of appendices:	Rod Jones: 01332 643815: rod.jones@derby.gov.uk Appendix 1: Implications Appendix 2: End of year project report

IMPLICATIONS

Financial

- 1.1 The Adoption Reform Grant has been awarded to local authorities for the financial year of 2014/15 as a non-ring fenced grant. The grant will be used for supporting Children's Services in Derby achieve permanency for children in care.

Legal

- 2.1 Not applicable

Personnel

- 3.1 There are likely to be changes to the staffing structure within adoption which is part of a wider review of adoption services in Derby. This will be subject to a consultation plan.

Equalities Impact

- 4.1 Not applicable

Health and Safety

- 5.1 Not applicable

Carbon commitment

- 6.1 Not applicable

Value for money

- 7.1 This will be evidenced through improved outcomes for children in care

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

- 8.1 This fits with the priority of - good quality services that meet local need
- 8.2 The Adoption improvement plan will ensure:
- All people in Derby will enjoy achieving their learning potential
 - All people in Derby will enjoy being safe and feeling safe

