

Summary Sheet

Council Report

Corporate Parenting Panel

Title: Rotherham Adoption Service Annual Report 2017/18

Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan? No

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Mel Meggs (Deputy Strategic Director CYPS)

Report Author(s)

Helen Mangham (Team Manager – Adoption)

Ward(s) Affected All

List of Appendices Included: Annual Adoption Report 2017/18

Background Papers: None

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

Corporate Parenting Panel

Council Approval Required: No

Exempt from the Press and Public: No

1. Background

- 1.1 This report is an annual report to brief on the business and activity within the Council's Adoption Service in 2017/18.
- 1.2 The report provides performance and activity data on the service, reports on the activity and functioning of the Adoption Panel, and details service developments that have occurred in the year and those that are planned moving through 2018/19.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That CPP receives the Adoption Annual Report 2017/18, considers it makes comment on any issues arising

3. Key Issues

- 3.1 The service continues to achieve adoption for a high number of Looked after children including harder to place children with 27 children being adopted in 2017/18. Tracking and monitoring of adoption plans continues to ensure a timely response to adoption and early identification of areas of delay so swift action can be taken to address this.
- 3.2 In this adoption year, the service has been successful in achieving adoption for a wide range of children who are considered 'harder to place' due to age, disability, ethnicity or part of a sibling group. 29.6% were children considered to be harder to place.
- 3.3 Rotherham Adoption Team has continued to promote early permanence planning for children with seven Early Permanence Placements (EPP) being made in 2017/18.
- 3.4 Performance on the 2 key Adoption Scorecards has improved this year with timeliness for children improving against both measures and A1 being 110 days below the target measure of 426 days and A2 being only 3.7 days over the target measure of 121 days.
- 3.5 Rotherham Adoption Service has successfully supported adoptive families by accessing the Adoption Support Fund, with 65 families (72 children) benefiting from therapeutic support packages in 2017/18 equating to £315,681.87 secured funding from ASF.
- 3.6 Two adoption placements disrupted in 2017/18 for 3 children. Independent disruption reviews identified lessons learned and these have been implemented. The plan for the single child has changed to Long Term Fostering in recognition of his significant attachment and behaviour needs. Family Finding is ongoing for the sibling group of 2 with potential families identified.

- 3.7 The Panel has operated successfully and plays a key quality assurance role. The quality of CPRs has been variable and the Quality Assurance Group has been introduced to improve consistent quality.

4. Improvement and Development for 2018/19 onwards

- 4.1 We will continue to strive to improve and develop our service over 2018 – 2019. Adoption has a key role to play within our overall Looked after Children and Care Leavers Strategy and the Right Child Right Care strategy. Key improvement actions include:
- Recruit more adopters who are able to meet the needs of children with an adoption plan.
 - Increase number of Early Permanence Placements available and the use of EPP to include consideration for older children.
 - Improve the timeliness of the adoption journey for both children and applicant adopters through robust tracking.
 - Improve the quality of assessments.
 - Improve the quality of post adoption support plans.
 - Continued access to Adoption Support Fund to ensure that adoption therapeutic support needs are best met.
 - Use training, supervision, tracking meetings, legal gateway meetings and Public Law Outline to promote adoption best practice and ensure that timely planning and achieving permanence is prioritised.
 - Address changes needed to Transition planning in line with research and practice.
 - Review and improve the quality of life story work
 - Engage in the ongoing development of the South Yorkshire Regional Adoption Agency

5. Options considered and recommended proposal:

To note content and raise any challenge

6. Consultation

Not applicable

7. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

Not applicable

8. Financial and Procurement Implications

- 8.1 There are no direct financial implications to this report. The Adoption Team, in conjunction with Service Manager and Head of Service continues to monitor the Adoption Team spend in line with RMBC finance team. Rotherham Adoption Team's current projected spend is within budget, but there may be overspend on the interagency budget. The mitigating factor here is that Rotherham are committed to making timely placements to ensure that there is no drift for children in care when the plan is adoption. The establishment of the South Yorkshire Regional Adoption Agency aims to reduce interagency fees.

8.2 Outturn figures for 2017-18 were as follows:

| Service Costs | 2017/18 Budget | 2017/18 Actual | Variance |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| Adoption Team | 954,132 | 845,574 | (108,558) |
| Adoption Allowances | 1,030,746 | 985,529 | (45,217) |
| Inter Agency Adoption Placements | 508,496 | 403,281 | (105,215) |
| TOTAL | 2,493,374 | 2,234,384 | (258,990) |

9. Legal Implications

9.1 There are no direct legal implications to this report, save to say that the Adoption Team operate within appropriate legislation, such as the Children Act 1989, Adoption and Children Act 2002, Adoption Regulations, Statutory Guidance and RMBC policy and procedures.

10. Human Resources Implications

10.1 There are no direct human resource implications to this report.

11. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

11.1 The Adoption Team Performance Report 2017 – 2018 relates to services for looked after children where the plan has been adoption, the recruitment and assessment of adopters, matching and placing adoptive children and securing permanency for children with their adoptive families.

12. Equalities and Human Rights Implications

12.1 There are no direct implications within this report, other than to say that the Adoption Team are compliant with the Human Rights Act and Equal Opportunities Policy.

13. Implications for Partners and Other Directorates

13.1 Not applicable.

14. Risks and Mitigation

14.1 Inability and lack of engagement in performance and management arrangements by managers and staff could lead to drift and delay for looked after children where the plan is adoption. The Right Child Right Care initiative will alleviate this risk alongside continued ongoing good managerial oversight and quality assurance. In addition, there needs to be good management oversight regarding the recruitment and assessment of adopters to ensure smooth running of the adoption process. Rotherham Adoption Scorecard and scorecard tracking meetings enable clear planning for children where the plan is adoption. Strong managerial oversight by Directorship Leadership Team along with fortnightly Performance Management Meetings mitigates risks by holding managers and workers to account for

practice and enabling a climate for managers to check and challenge practice across services.

15. Accountable Officer(s)

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Approvals Obtained from:-

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Director of Legal Services:- Neil Concannon

Head of Human Resources:- Amy Leech

Name and Job Title.

Helen Mangham Team Manager, Adoption

Jill Stanley Team Manager, Adoption

Anne-Marie Banks Service Manager, Adoption, Fostering and Therapeutic Team

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