



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

24TH JANUARY 2019

NATIONAL ADOPTION ANNUAL REPORT 2017/2018 AND THE VALE, VALLEYS AND CARDIFF REGIONAL ADOPTION COLLABORATIVE ANNUAL REPORT 2017/18

REPORT OF THE GROUP DIRECTOR, COMMUNITY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDER, COUNCILLOR LEYSHON

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1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Cabinet with (1) an update on the progress of the Vale, Valleys and Cardiff Regional Adoption Collaborative by considering the information provided in the Annual Report for the period 1st April 2017 to the 31st March 2018 (Appendix 1 and Appendix A) and (2) the National Adoption Services Wales Annual Report 2017/2018 (Appendix 2).

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 2.1 Consider the contents of both the Annual Reports.
- 2.2 Receive a further report at future meetings.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The reports attached at Appendix 1 (A) and Appendix 2 are the Annual Reports that as part of Regulation 22 of the Local Authority Adoption Service (Wales) Regulations 2007 and Section 15(c) of the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (Joint Adoption Regulations/Wales) Directions 2015, are required to be presented to Cabinet.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The National Adoption Services for Wales (NAS) was launched in November 2014 bringing all Local Authorities in Wales together into a unique collaboration for the delivery of adoption services. The National Service establishes governance arrangements providing national

direction and coordination. Its broad aim is to improve and make consistent the arrangements for timely placements of children, training and assessment of adopters, adoption supports and collaborative working. The National Adoption Services Wales Annual Report 2017/2018 gives the progress and improvements made in meeting the needs of children, young people and adopters through out Wales.

4.2 Vale, Valleys and Cardiff Adoption Collaborative (VVC) is the largest of the five regional collaborative which form part of the National Adoption Service in Wales (NAS). It provides a regional adoption service to the Vale of Glamorgan Council, Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council, Cardiff Council and Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council. The service is hosted by the Vale of Glamorgan Council.

4.3 This is VVC's third annual report that covers the period 1st April 2017 to 31st March 2018. The collaborative is required to review the service it provides by regulation and as part of the reporting requirements set out in the legal agreement underpinning the operation of the collaborative. The annual report seeks to combine the various reporting requirements in one report. This report was also presented to the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee on the 7th November 2018.

5. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 These reports are for information and, therefore, no Equality and Diversity screening is required.

6. CONSULTATION

6.1 Consultation was undertaken by the National Adoption Service Wales and the Vale, Valleys and Cardiff Adoption Collaborative (VVC) in the preparation of the Annual Reports with children, young people, families, a variety of partner agencies and staff.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

7.1 There are no adverse financial implications associated with this report.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

8.1 The Social Services and Wellbeing Act (2014) requires very significant changes to the way social services are planned, designed, commissioned and delivered. The primary duties of this Act that impact on the future commissioning arrangements for children looked after include:

- promoting the upbringing of children within their family whenever it is safe to do so;

- consideration of the most appropriate placement where it has not been possible to place a looked after child either with a parent or connected person which will include: foster care; adoption; residential provision; alternative arrangements (for example, supporting young people aged 16 or over to live independently in rented accommodation or in supported lodgings).

9. LINKS TO THE CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT

- 9.1. The National Adoption Service and Regional VVC Service makes a positive contribution towards the Council's Corporate Plan Vision of '*a County Borough that has high aspirations, is confident and promotes opportunity for all*'; as it will deliver against the specific priorities of '*People - Promoting independence and positive lives for everyone and Place - Creating neighbourhoods where people are proud to live and work*'.
- 9.2 It will also help the Council to meet three of the seven wellbeing goals that The Well Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015' puts in place as follows:
1. A more equal Wales
 2. A healthier Wales
 3. A Wales of cohesive communities.

10. CONCLUSION

- 10.1 Both these reports provide Cabinet Members with the National and Regional overview of adoption within Wales and the Region.
- 10.2 Cabinet Members will note that the regional performance has improved, specifically the increase in the number of children placed for adoption and the reduced time taken to place a child for adoption.
- 10.3 There are still a number of areas that require improvement and these are being addressed in the VVC Regional Improvement Plan.

Other Information:-

Relevant Scrutiny Committee

Community and Children's Services Scrutiny Committee

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Background papers

Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee - 7th November 2018.

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