



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

**VALE, VALLEYS AND CARDIFF REGIONAL ADOPTION
COLLABORATION ANNUAL REPORT 2022-2023**

30TH JANUARY 2024

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES IN DISCUSSION
WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDER, COUNCILLOR G CAPLE**

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1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The purpose of the report is to provide Corporate Parenting Board members with information about the performance of the Regional Adoption Collaboration (RAC) Board.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Corporate Parenting Board:

- 2.1 Note the information.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Adoption is an important permanence option for younger children where reunification cannot be considered. The RAC is required to present an annual report to elected members.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Vale, Valleys, and Cardiff Adoption Collaborative (VVC) as part of the National Adoption Service in Wales (NAS), provides a regional adoption service to the Vale of Glamorgan Council, Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council, Cardiff Council and Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council.
- 4.2 This is VVC's seventh annual report and covers the period 1 April 2021 to 30 September 2022. (Annual report). The report has been extended to cover the first six months of this reporting year to incorporate the

requirement to review the service under Regulation 39 of the Local Authority Adoption Services (Wales) Regulations 2019. It also incorporates the reporting requirements set out in the governance arrangements for the region in one report. Every effort has been made to ensure that the information provided is an accurate record of the activity and quality of the adoption service.

4.3 The annual report has the following Appendices:

Appendix 1 sets out key performance data in respect of children by quarter and local authority.

Appendix 2 provides information in respect of adopter enquiries and recruitment of adopters.

Appendix 3 provides information in respect of Adoption Support.

Appendix 4 provides information in respect of Adoption Panel activity.

5. **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS / SOCIO-ECONOMIC DUTY**

5.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has not been carried out in relation to this specific report,

6. **WELSH LANGUAGE IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 Likewise, a Welsh Language Impact Assessment has not been carried out in relation to this specific report

7. **CONSULTATION / INVOLVEMENT**

7.1 Staff, partner agencies, Panel members, young people and parents are often involved in developmental activities linked to the National Adoption Service.

8. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)**

8.1 The work outlined in this report is delivered within children's services budgeted resources.

9. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED**

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

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

10.2 The work outlined here will 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:

- A more equal Wales
- A healthier Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities

10.3 The proposed changes are also consistent with the sustainable approach promoted by the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act through the five ways of working:

- Long-term – the proposals seek to make a long-term difference to people's lives, the way we work with families and the Council's resources.
- Prevention – the proposal is fundamentally focused upon strengthening our prevention offer.
- Integration – Partner organisations work jointly to achieve good outcomes for children and families
- Collaboration and Involvement – Families, and staff are often involved in the evaluation and proposal

11. CONCLUSION

11.1 At the end of the reporting period, the service is able to report a healthy level of performance. In terms of the placement of children for adoption, a significant number have been placed in a timely way and there are less children waiting. The region has not experienced a marked reduction in referrals for adoption as apparent in other areas, but this will be continue to be monitored closely on a regional and national basis. Similarly, VVC has also been able to approve a significant pool of adopters during this time with the result that more children can be placed within the region. The need however, to continue to recruit more adopters for our more complex children remains a priority for VVC whilst at the same time managing the expectations of those adopters waiting. The reduction in enquiries to adopt again will need to be monitored carefully to ensure that the service can respond proactively and remain innovative in order to attract the best families.

12.2 Going forward Adoption Support probably represents the biggest set of challenges for VVC. The requirement to build robust Adoption Support plans for children with ongoing support as needed and for this to underpin our core offer for adopters does impact upon our ability to adequately resource these requirements. The need to reduce our

waiting list for services and to ensure that our service is targeted to those most in need remain a priority.

- 12.3 The requirement to develop Adoption Support services is set against a backdrop of an ever-increasing national improvement agenda. The full implementation of the NAS Good Practice Guides places new expectations upon the way services work with adopters, birth parents and children and young people both pre and post adoption. The full impact of these new ways of working will need to be monitored and evaluated. The appointment of the Social Care Officers within the service provides the region with an exciting opportunity to meet some of these expectations especially in terms of follow up with adoptive families and birth parents post adoption and so their roles will need to be developed to meet these expectations. Meeting the objectives laid out in the NAS Adopt Cymru 2025 does also place other expectations upon the service which will have to be evaluated so that gaps in meeting these objectives can be identified.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

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