

## **RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### **CABINET**

**25<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2018**

#### **NATIONAL ADOPTION SERVICE WALES ANNUAL REPORT 2016-2017**

#### **REPORT OF THE GROUP DIRECTOR, COMMUNITY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES IN DISCUSSION WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDER, COUNCILLOR C LEYSHON**

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#### **1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to share with the Cabinet the National Adoption Service Wales Annual Report 2016-2017

#### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Cabinet:

- 2.1 Note the contents of the report.

#### **3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 The report attached at Appendix 1 is the National Adoption Service for Wales Annual Report 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, that is required to be brought before Cabinet.

#### **4. BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 The National Adoption Service 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 legal basis underpinning the service is the Social Services and Well-being Act (Wales) which gave Welsh Ministers the power to direct how local authorities in Wales deliver their adoption functions. This was enforced through a set of regulations, The Adoption and Children Act 2002 (Joint Adoption Arrangements) (Wales) Directions 2015 [generally referred

to as the 'Directions Powers'] which require local authorities to collaborate on a set foot print to create Regional Adoption Collaborative.

4.2 The National Service establishes governance arrangements provide national direction and co-ordination. Its broad aim is to improve and make consistent the arrangements for timely placements of children, training and assessment of adopters, adoption support and collaborative working

4.3 The attached Annual Plan sets out the work undertaken by the National Adoption Service Wales in 2016-2017.

## **5. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 This is an information report and therefore no Equality and Diversity screening is required.

## **6. CONSULTATION**

6.1 Consultation was undertaken by the National Adoption Service Wales in the preparation of the Annual Plan with children, young people, families, a variety of partner agencies and staff from the Regional Services.

## **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 COUNCIL'S CORPORATE PLAN/OTHER CORPORATE PRIORITIES**

9.1 The provision of effective responses to the needs of children and young people is a key priority for the Council and is supported by the contents of this Annual Plan.

## **10. CONCLUSION**

- 10.1 Overall fewer children were placed for adoption in Wales during 2016-2017 but those who needed adoptive placements faced fewer delays in being placed.
- 10.2 The number of children where the plan was for adoption had started to rise during 2016-2017 with the trend continuing into the current year. This highlighted the gap between the level of adopters being recruited and the number of children becoming available for adoption, thus emphasising the need to increase recruitment.

### **Other Information:-**

***Relevant Scrutiny Committee: Children and Young People***

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

**AS AMENDED BY**

**THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985**

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**Background Papers**

None

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