

ADOPTION ANNUAL REPORT

To: **Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee**

Meeting Date: **18 September 2019**

From: **Julie-Anne Saunders,
Head of Adoption**

Electoral division(s): **All**

Purpose: **To provide the Corporate Parenting Sub Committee with an update of Adoption Service activity 2018/19 and as part of the monitoring of the adoption agency required under the Local Authority Adoption Service Regulations 2003 and Adoption National Minimum Standards 2011.**

Recommendation: **The Sub-Committee is recommended to:**

- a) Consider and sign off the report for the purposes of Local Authority Adoption Service Regulation and Adoption Minimum Standards 2011.**

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Summary:

This report describes the activity of Coram Cambridgeshire Adoption Agency between 1 April 2018 and 31 March 2019, and its functions as it relates to the provision of adoption services to the Council.

The report summarises performance across all of its functions including Recruitment and Assessment, Adoption Panel, Family Finding and Adoption Support. The report covers the key areas pertinent to the discharge of the service including; staffing, adoption panel activity, journey of children to adoption incorporating matching, recruitment and marketing activity, adopter's journey, and adoption support activity relating to adopted families, adopted children, adopted adults and birth parents. There is also an update on Cambridgeshire's performance on key national performance indicator (Adoption Scorecard).

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 On 1st August 2014, , Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) transferred the staff, operation and delivery of its adoption service to Coram Cambridgeshire Adoption (CCA), a Voluntary Adoption Agency (VAA) under a Framework Agreement. The organisation first registered with Ofsted (SC476782) in March 2014 for this purpose.
- 1.2 Cambridgeshire's Framework Agreement ended on 31.07.19 and the Adoption Service and subsequently adoption activity has been brought back into the Council.
- 1.3 This report is provided to the Corporate Parenting Sub Committee as part of the monitoring of the adoption agency required under the Local Authority Adoption Service Regulations 2003 and Adoption National Minimum Standards 2011. Please see Appendix 1 for the full report.

2. MAIN ISSUES

- 2.1 **Adoption Panel** – The adoption Panel was held on 29 occasions and heard 88 cases including 30 adopter approvals which also included eight adoptive households who were dually approved for early permanence / foster for adoption and considered 58 children's matches.
- 2.2 **Children and Adoption** – A total of 136 children were referred for family finding during the year and 65 children had a care plan for adoption agreed by the Agency Decision Maker. At the end of the year 59 children had been placed with their adoptive families. This includes 12 sibling groups and five children had been placed via early permanence. 62 children became the subject of Placement Orders although the time that it takes between children becoming looked after and their Placement Orders being granted is

increasing. 60% of children open to family finders are still in proceedings. 44 Adoption Orders were granted for children placed for adoption.

- 2.3 **Adopters** – work continues on adopter recruitment with 257 enquiries received, 22 Information Sessions were held with 136 individuals (121 households) attending, 43 households progressed to a Registration of Interest, 31 progressed to stage 2 and 30 attended panel and were approved by the Agency Decision Maker.
- 2.4 **Adoption Support** – 77 new referrals were received for an adoption support assessment of need, 205 children were open and received a service across 127 families. The team continue to provide a universal offer of adoption support including foundation's for attachment course for adopters of newly placed children, stay and play groups, living with aggression. 154 Families were referred to the Adoption Support Fund and received therapeutic services during the course of the year. Adoption support groups continue to run in 4 locations and in addition children's groups continue to run for older and younger adopted children. There have been 1096 indirect letter box exchanges between adopted children and their birth families. Two birth parent support groups are in place to support this work.
- 2.5 **Adoptive Adults and Birth Relatives** - The team received 36 new referrals for adult work, 36 open cases and there is a managed waiting list for this service. In addition there were 21 referrals for Birth Relative Outreach work.
- 2.6 **Adoption Scorecard** – Cambridgeshire's national scorecard performance for 2015/2018 was released during the period of this report. This is a three year average of performance in a number of key performance areas. For Indicator A1 Cambridgeshire is ranked 13th nationally and for indicator A2 it is now ranked 54th nationally with performance in 18/19 showing an improving picture.

3. **SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS**

3.1 **Resource Implications**

There are no immediate resource implications attached to this report

3.2 **Procurement/Contractual/Council Contract Procedure Rules Implications**

There are no currently no contract procurement implications relating to this report, as the procurement arrangements between Coram Cambridgeshire Adoption and Cambridgeshire ceased with the transition of the Adoption Service back to the Local Authority on 31 July 2019.

3.3 Statutory, Legal and Risk Implications

This Adoption Agency report is prepared as part of the monitoring requirements for the Adoption Agency under the Local Authority Adoption Service Regulations 2003 and Adoption National Minimum Standards 2011.

3.4 Equality and Diversity Implications

There are no Equality and Diversity implications to be considered.

3.5 Engagement and Communications Implications

There are no Engagement and Communications Implications attached directly to this report.

3.6 Localism and Local Member Involvement

There has been no Local Member involvement related to this report or the Adoption Agency

3.7 Public Health Implications

There are no Public Health implications attached to this report

Source Documents	Location
None	