

**From:** Roger Gough, Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education

Matt Dunkley, CBE, Corporate Director for Children, Young People and Education

**To:** Corporate Parenting Panel 17<sup>th</sup> September 2019

**Subject:** **Kent Adoption Service Annual Report 2018 / 2019**  
**Kent Adoption Service Business Plan 2019**

**Classification:** Unrestricted

**Summary:**

This Annual Report provides members with an overview of the Kent Adoption Service from March 2018 - April 2019. The Annual Report outlines the structure and the work of the adoption service during 2018-2019. It provides detailed analysis of the performance of Kent's Adoption Service in relation to children's and adopters adoption journeys during this time, measured against DfE performance indicators. It describes the nature and use of the vast range of support that is available to adopted children and their adoptive parents beyond the granting of the adoption order. It also suggests the direction of travel in respect of the plans to progress the government's vision of Regional Adoption Agencies.

The Kent Adoption Service Business Plan 2019 details the areas of priority and development in the coming year.

Members of the Corporate Parenting Panel are asked to **NOTE** the information contained within the Kent Adoption Annual Report and Business Plan 2019.

## 1. Introduction.

- 1.1 Kent County Council (KCC) is committed to ensuring that children can remain in the care of their parents and birth families wherever possible. However, where it is not possible to achieve stability for the child within the birth family, we work to achieve alternative permanent arrangements for the child within a family setting and these include adoption.
- 1.2 Kent County Council aims to ensure that the Kent Adoption Service recruits and approves adopters who can meet the needs of Kent children for whom adoption is the plan.
- 1.3 Kent County Council recognises the importance of supporting adoptive families beyond the granting of an adoption order.
- 1.4 The Annual Report outlines the key functions of the Kent Adoption Service and provides a summary of work undertaken from April 2018 to March 2019. The annual report is an opportunity to celebrate our successes as a service and to identify areas

for improvement as we work towards delivering an Outstanding service, which will be recognised as such by Ofsted.

- 1.5 The business plan sets out how the Kent Adoption Service intends to deliver its services in the coming year to ensure the needs of children and adoptive parents, adoptees and birth parents/families are met in a timely manner and to an excellent standard.
- 1.6 The plan details actions to be undertaken and how performance will be monitored. It uses the National Minimum Standards (NMS) applicable to the provision of adoption services. The NMS together with the Adoption Regulations 2013 form the basis of the regulatory framework for the conduct of adoption agencies.

## **2. Body of the Annual Report and Business Plan**

- 2.1 The annual report focuses on the adoption journey for children and adoptive parents and how this is translated into practice. It also outlines the unique and extensive support provided to adoptive families.
- 2.2 The annual report refers to the government initiative of creating Regional Adoption Agencies and Kent's ongoing work in partnership with London Borough Bexley, and Medway Council to comply with this requirement.
- 2.3 The Business Plan sets out the direction of the service and our ambition to achieve the recruitment of 80 adoptive households in the coming year. This figure is based on the number of single children and sibling groups placed during 2018/19, with an extra 20% added to ensure sufficiency and choice.

## **3. Conclusions**

- 3.1 The annual report demonstrates a dynamic adoption service, which consistently seeks to improve performance whilst developing in line with national initiatives and being at the forefront of innovative practice. The business plan drafted for the coming year aims to consolidate good practice and further develop the service. Potential changes are on the horizon with the development of a Regional Adoption Agency and possible changes to the Adoption Support Fund both of which will impact on the Kent adoption service. However, the service will continue to keep best outcomes for children and adoptive families at the centre of their work and ensure that any future changes do not impact negatively on its service delivery.

## **4. Recommendation**

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| <p><b>Recommendations:</b> Members of the Corporate Parenting Panel are asked to <b>NOTE</b> and <b>COMMENT</b> on the information contained within the Kent Adoption Service Annual Report 2018/19 and Business Plan 2019.</p> |
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## **5. Background documents**

- 5.1 The Annual Report March 2018 - April 2019 including:

- Kent Adoption Service Structure Chart
- Kent Adoption Business Plan

Appendix A  
Appendix B

## 6. Contact details

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