

Adoption Agency Annual Report 2017/18

Report of: Cllr Steve Dixon, Executive Member for Social Care and Housing
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Purpose of this report

1. The report and appendix outline the statutory framework regarding the Adoption annual report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive or Committee are asked to:

1. Note the statutory report

Overview and Scrutiny Comments/Recommendations

1. The report is planned to be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Issues

2. Appendix 1 is the Adoption annual Report for 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018.

Options for consideration

3. None

Council Priorities

4. Adoption is a key statutory service to Looked After Children.
 - Enhancing Central Bedfordshire
 - Great resident services

- Improving education and skills
- Protecting the vulnerable; improving wellbeing
- Creating stronger communities
- A more efficient and responsive Council.

Corporate Implications

Risk Management:

5. Regulatory Risks: The provision of sufficient and suitable adoption placements is a key activity monitored by Ofsted during inspection, forming part of their judgement about services for Looked after Children.
6. Child Protection Risks: Failure to recruit or retain sufficient and suitable adopters would be a child protection risk.
7. Reputational Risk: Recruitment of adopters is a competitive market activity and has a high media profile.
8. Financial Risk: Looked after Children placements is a demand led activity. Interagency adoption placements are high cost and can have significant and immediate impact on forecast spend.

Legal Implications

9. Adoption regulations, associated Statutory Guidance and National Minimum Standards outline the requirement to report to Members on the management and outcomes of the service, in order that they can satisfy themselves that the service is effective and achieving good outcomes for children.

Financial and Risk Implications

10. This report provides updating information and does not include any financial decisions / implications

Equalities Implications

11. Central Bedfordshire Council has a statutory duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and foster good relations in respect of nine protected characteristics; age disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

The annual adoption report highlights that all 14 children matched for adoption were recorded as White British, and that of the 14 children matched for adoption by Central Bedfordshire, 11 were male and 3 were female. Of the 12 Adoption Orders granted during the period 4 were male and 8 were female. These differences may warrant further consideration. In order to ensure a range of adopters are recruited a blended marketing approach of traditional and digital

marketing was utilised to attract a diverse range of people and families to consider adoption for Central Bedfordshire Council. The level of disruption to placements is very low.

The adoption panel report highlights that there is still a continued need to recruit more male members to Panel and a broader diversity of minority representation.

12. The annual report highlights how these considerations are taken into account. Examples include:

- Diversity related training provided for the panel and adopters
- A range of recruitment activity
- No adoption disruptions in this period, reflecting the care given to the matching process
- Continued membership of New Family Social, a national charity supporting adopters and foster carers from the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender community.

Conclusion and next Steps

13. The Corporate Parenting Panel is asked to note the Adoption Agency statutory report for 2017-18.

Appendices

Appendix A: Adoption Agency, Annual Report 1st April 2017 – 31st March 2018

Background Papers

None

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