



EXECUTIVE BOARD DECISION

REPORT OF:	Executive Member for Children's Services
LEAD OFFICER:	Director of Children's Services
DATE:	15/06/2017

PORTFOLIO/S AFFECTED:	Children's Services
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WARD/S AFFECTED:	All
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KEY DECISION:	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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SUBJECT: Adoption Service End of Year Report – 1 October 2016 to 31 March 2017

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To provide information on the management and performance of the Local Authority's Adoption Service.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Executive Board:
Notes the half yearly report which is available on the Council website.

3. BACKGROUND

Standard 25.6 of the National Minimum Standards for Adoption requires the Local Authority Adoption Agency to produce a six monthly report to be received by the Council's Executive.

The standard states that the Council's Executive:

- Receive written reports on the management, outcomes and financial state of the agency every 6 months;
- Monitor the management and outcomes of the services in order to satisfy themselves that the agency is effective and is achieving good outcomes for children and/or service users;
- Satisfy themselves that the agency is complying with the conditions of registration.

The report has been written to address the issues identified above, and will be taken into account by OFSTED when inspecting the Service.

The report summarises the performance of the Adoption Service for the six month period from 1st October 2016 to 31st March 2017 and provides an overview of the work of the Service for this period, plus a summary of the year.

4. KEY ISSUES

1. Collaborative working has developed further across the Regional Adoption Agency local authorities with agreed joint processes and procedures in place. A Head of Service has now been appointed who is due to start in May 2017.

2. There has been gradual improvement in the timescales for matching children with prospective adopters and a sharp rise in the number of children with plans for adoption. These include a number of larger and older sibling groups as well as some younger children with significant health issues. There have been no disruptions relating to Blackburn with Darwen children, continuing the excellent track record of the last ten years.

3. The number of adopters approved this year is low, however there are currently a high number of prospective adopters going through various stages of assessment. There has also been a further recruitment drive at the end of the financial year. There remains a small pool of adopters awaiting children however the majority of these have been waiting less than six months.

4. There are more cases open to Post Adoption Support than ever, most of which are assessment and support cases. Many of those open to the service have made successful applications to the Adoption Support Fund for therapeutic interventions. Fast Track has continued to support children and their carers in the absence of a psychologist by using the skills and experience of the Fast Track Child Support Officer.

5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

No policy implications identified.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

No financial implications identified.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

This report is required to meet statutory requirements as set out in the 'National Minimum Standards for Adoption.'

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

No resource implications identified.

9. EQUALITY AND HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

Please select one of the options below. Where appropriate please include the hyperlink to the EIA.

Option 1 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) not required – the EIA checklist has been completed.

Option 2 In determining this matter the Executive Member needs to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision. *(insert EIA link here)*

Option 3 In determining this matter the Executive Board members need to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision. *(insert EIA attachment)*

10. CONSULTATIONS

None.

11. STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

The recommendations are made further to advice from the Monitoring Officer and the Section 151 Officer has confirmed that they do not incur unlawful expenditure. They are also compliant with equality legislation and an equality analysis and impact assessment has been considered. The recommendations reflect the core principles of good governance set out in the Council's Code of Corporate Governance.

12. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

All Declarations of Interest of any Executive Member consulted and note of any dispensation granted by the Chief Executive will be recorded in the Summary of Decisions published on the day following the meeting.

VERSION:	V1.0
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CONTACT OFFICER:	Alyson Hanson – Service Leader, Placement Services
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DATE:	25 th April 2017
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BACKGROUND PAPER:	Adoption Service end of Year Report – 1 October 2016 – 31 March 2017
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