



# EXECUTIVE BOARD DECISION

**REPORT OF:** Executive Member for Children's Services

**LEAD OFFICER:** Director of Children's Services

**DATE:** 14th December 2017

**PORTFOLIO/S AFFECTED:** Children's Services

**WARD/S AFFECTED:** All

**KEY DECISION:** YES  NO

**SUBJECT:** Adoption Service Six Monthly Report – 1 April 2017 – 30 September 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:

- a. Receive written reports on the management, outcomes and financial state of the agency every 6 months;
- b. 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;
- c. Satisfy themselves that the agency is complying with the conditions of registration.

The report has been written to address the issues identified above, and it 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 April 2017 to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2017 and provides an overview of the work of the Service for this period.

#### 4. KEY ISSUES

1. Over the past six months planning for the Regional Adoption Agency has taken up a significant amount of time for managers, the Service Leader and Head of Service. The Regional Adoption Agency was launched on 20<sup>th</sup> November.
2. There has been a slight increase in the number of children with plans for adoption, more in line with the increase seen in Children Looked After and Care Proceedings. Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council continues to be child focussed in the planning decision made resulting in a higher than average number of children, who are considered harder to place with plans for adoption.
3. There has been a significant improvement in the timescales for matching and placing children over the past six months although this will not impact the Scorecard until next year.
4. Two adoptive placements disrupted in the very early stages of placement, affecting four older children.
3. The number of adopters approved has increased in the last six months but not in line with the number of children with plans for adoption. Those approved however offer a range of matching criteria and very few of those waiting have now been waiting for any significant length of time.
4. The demand on Post Adoption Support has reduced over the past six months although the Team continues to work with a number of very complex cases requiring high levels of support. The Mailbox contact received an overhaul in the last financial year and the positive results of this have been seen in the last six months resulting in a reduction in the number of referrals due to the smoother running of the service.

#### 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.

<b>VERSION:</b>	<b>V2.0</b>
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<b>CONTACT OFFICER:</b>	Alyson Hanson – Service Leader, Placement Services
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<b>DATE:</b>	3 November 2017
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<b>BACKGROUND PAPER:</b>	Adoption Service Six Monthly Report – 1 April 2017 – 30 September 2017
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