
Decision Maker: Care Services Portfolio Holder

Date: For Pre-Decision Scrutiny by the Care Services PDS Committee on 4 September 2012

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Executive Non-Key

Title: **ANNUAL REPORT OF THE BROMLEY ADOPTION AGENCY AND THE BROMLEY ADOPTION AGENCY STATEMENT OF PURPOSE 2012 - 2013**

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Chief Officer: Kay Weiss, Assistant Director (Safeguarding and Social Care)

Ward: All

1. Reason for report

- 1.1 The London Borough of Bromley is a registered Adoption Agency (known as Bromley Adoption Agency). The work of Bromley Adoption Agency is governed by the Adoption and Children Act 2002 and is subject to the Adoption Agency Regulations (AAR) 2005 and 2011 and the National Minimum Standards (NMS) 2011.
- 1.2 Standard 25.6 of the National Minimum Standards 2011 requires the Adoption Agency to produce a six monthly report on adoption activity to the Agency Executive, to:
- receive written reports on the management, outcomes and financial state of the agency;
 - 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.
- 1.3 It is therefore proposed that a report be presented to the Executive Working Party for Safeguarding and Corporate Parenting on a six monthly cycle with an annual report being presented to the Care Services Portfolio Holder following scrutiny by the Care Services PDS.
- 1.4 In addition, it is a requirement under standard 18.3 of the National Minimum Standards that the Adoption Agency approves and annually reviews the Statement of Purpose and children's guides. The annual report to the Portfolio Holder following scrutiny by the Care Services PDS will satisfy this requirement.

2. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

2.1 **The Care Services Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee is asked to:**

- (1) **consider and comment upon the Annual Report of Adoption Activity 2011 - 2012 (Appendix 1);**
- (2) **consider and comment upon the Statement of Purpose 2012 – 2013 (Appendix 2);**
- (3) **consider and comment upon the children's guides (copies to be circulated);**
- (4) **consider and comment upon the proposal that the statutory six monthly report is scrutinised by the Executive Working Party for Safeguarding and Corporate Parenting with an annual report to be presented to the Care Services Policy and Scrutiny Committee.**

2.2 **The Care Services Portfolio Holder is asked to:**

- (1) **consider and approve the annual report of adoption activity 2011 – 2012;**
- (2) **consider and approve the Statement of Purpose 2012 – 2013;**
- (3) **consider and approve the Children's Guides;**
- (4) **consider and approve the arrangements outlined for the presentation of the six monthly reports to the Executive Working Party for Safeguarding and Corporate Parenting and the annual report to be presented for consideration to the Care Services PDS and Portfolio Holder.**

Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: Existing Policy:
 2. BBB Priority: Children and Young People:
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Financial

1. Cost of proposal: No Cost:
 2. Ongoing costs: Not Applicable:
 3. Budget head/performance centre: Adoption Service
 4. Total current budget for this head: £764,450.00
 5. Source of funding: Base Budget
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Staff

1. Number of staff (current and additional): 11Fte
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours:
-

Legal

1. Legal Requirement: Statutory Requirement:
 2. Call-in: Applicable:
-

Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected): N/A
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Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? Not Applicable
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments:

3. COMMENTARY

- 3.1 The National Minimum Standards (NMS) 2011 for adoption require that all Adoption Agencies provide a six monthly report of their key functions, activity and the key objectives.
- 3.2 Similarly, the NMS requires that the agency also approves and annually reviews the Adoption Agency's '*Statement of Purpose*' and children guides.
- 3.3 This report provides an account of the work of Bromley Adoption Agency during the financial year 2011/12.
- 3.4 The Bromley Adoption Agency carries out its work through the Adoption Panel and the Safeguarding and Social Care Division, and in particular the Adoption Team, who provide a borough wide service within the Social Care Division of the Children and Young People Service. The Agency has well-developed links with other borough wide services and key stakeholders. The work of the Adoption Team contributes to improving outcomes for some of the most vulnerable children and young people in the borough and is in line with the priorities outlined in the Children and Young People's Plan.
- 3.5 The work of the Bromley Adoption Agency is governed by the Adoption and Children Act 2002 [ACA 2002] which was fully implemented in December 2005.
- 3.6 The Adoption Team undertakes a number of core duties. These include:
- adoption and post adoption support services;
 - locating prospective adoptive families for Bromley's children, where adoption is the plan;
 - recruitment and preparation of prospective adopters;
 - provision of advice and guidance to prospective adopters and social workers from Safeguarding and Social Care;
 - provision of birth records counselling;
 - intercountry and step parent adoption;
 - independent support to birth families affected by adoption;
 - attending meetings of the South East Adoption consortium, British Agencies of Adoption and Fostering (BAAF) and London Councils adoption and fostering agencies.
- 3.7 Adoption and post adoption support continues to be an area of work to develop and expand in order to meet the needs of adopters, children who have been adopted and the requirements of the Adoption and Children Act 2002.
- 3.8 The service is continually reviewing the recruitment of adopters to ensure that it reflects the profile of children that need to be placed for adoption. With consortium colleagues the service will maintain a focus on the need to recruit more BME adopters, adopters for older children, large sibling groups and children with complex needs. There will also continue to be a focus on the need to have sufficient numbers of adopters for children outside of the Bromley borough. These priorities reflect the profile of children coming through for adoption and the current profile of approved adopters.
- 3.9 Appendix 1 provides Members with the Annual Adoption Report 2011/2012. The report reviews progress and work around the approval of new adopters, of children placed for adoption and also details the development of adoption and post adoption support services.

- 3.10 During 2011/12 there were 23 adopters (13 units) approved and 25 children presented to adoption panel for approval. 17 children were placed for adoption during 2011/12.
- 3.11 Appendix 2 is the updated Bromley Adoption Agency's '*Statement of Purpose*', 2012 -2013.
- 3.12 The Adoption Minimum Standards were revised in 2011. The Practice Guidance on the Adoption and Children Act 2002 was revised in February 2011. Arrangements for the presentation of reports on a six monthly basis to meet statutory requirements are outlined in the main body of the report (Appendix 1)

4. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The London Borough of Bromley is a registered Adoption Agency (known as Bromley Adoption Agency). The work of Bromley Adoption Agency is governed by the Adoption and Children Act 2002 and is subject to the Adoption Agency Regulations (AAR) 2005 and 2011 and the National Minimum Standards (NMS) 2011.
- 4.2 The Statement of Purpose contributes to the priority outcomes for children and young people and to Building a Better Bromley.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Bromley Adoption Agency provides these services pursuant to their powers and duties under the Children Act 1989 and the Adoption and Children Act 2002.

Non-Applicable Sections:	Financial Implications Personnel Implications
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	