

CABINET - INFORMATION REPORT

Date Written	November 2020
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Service Area	Children's Services
Exempt/Non Exempt	Non Exempt
Committee Date	6 th January 2021

To: Chair, Ladies and Gentlemen

Vale, Valleys and Cardiff (VVC) Adoption Collaborative Annual Report for 1st April 2019 to 31st March 2020

1.0 SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

1.1 The VVC Adoption Annual Report, which is attached at Appendix 1, provides information about the business of the Regional Adoption Service during 2019-20.

2.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

2.1 The Vale, Valleys and Cardiff Adoption Collaborative (VVC) is the largest of the five regional collaboratives which forms part of the National Adoption Service in Wales (NAS). It provides a regional adoption service to the Vale of Glamorgan Council, Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council, Cardiff Council and Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council. The service is hosted by the Vale of Glamorgan Council.

2.2 The service functions include:

- Recruitment and Assessment of Adopters.
- Adoption Panel.
- Family Finding.
- Adoption Support.
- Transitions and Life Journey Work support.

3.0 WHERE WE WERE

- 3.1 During the year 2019-20, the regional adoption service responded to our high demand of business as usual in relation to the adoption process.

4.0 WHERE WE ARE NOW

- 4.1 The Regional Adoption Management Board meets monthly and receives updates in relation to the work of the business plan, performance reporting, the budget and other challenges and developments. The Portfolio Councillor for Social Services is a member of the Regional Adoption Committee that meets bi-annually and approves the budget for the Regional Adoption Collaborative.
- 4.2 The organisational and managerial structure of the service has remained the same as previous years during 2019-20 with service delivery structured around three functional teams. A managerial vacancy within the service was filled in September 2019 by the appointment of a new Adoption Support Manager.
- 4.3 In April 2019, as part of the Welsh Government award of £2.3M to improve adoption services in Wales, the region received a substantial investment of new monies which has enabled a number of new posts to be recruited across the service.

5.0 WHERE WE WANT TO BE

- 5.1 We are making plans for all Merthyr Tydfil looked after young people to achieve safe and successful lives and our commitment to the Adoption Service is key to that objective for children with a plan for adoption.
- 5.2 The COVID pandemic has naturally had an impact on the VVC Adoption Collaborative. Just prior to the end of the reporting period for 2019-20 the impact of the pandemic and national lockdown was beginning to take effect with VVC staff working from home and key services temporarily halted. The service however adapted quickly to the challenges presented and has been able to deliver its core business partly on a virtual basis or via risk assessed face to face contact. The VVC and Merthyr Tydfil Children's Services have worked in collaboration to enable the key functions of the VVC Adoption Collaborative to continue to be delivered. Going forward both services will continue to work in partnership to evaluate the effect upon services and develop plans to mitigate the overall impact upon service delivery of the pandemic.

6.0 WHAT WE NEED TO DO NEXT

- 6.1 Merthyr Tydfil Children's Services will continue to support the developing work of the Regional Adoption Collaborative in pursuit of ensuring successful permanent outcomes for younger looked after children with a plan for adoption.

7.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report as the business is delivered within existing budgetary limits.

8.0 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

8.1	Positive Impacts	Negative Impacts	Not Applicable
1. Merthyr Tydfil Well-being Objectives	4 of 4	0 of 4	0 of 4
2. Sustainable Development Principles - How have you considered the five ways of working: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long term • Prevention • Integration • Collaboration • Involvement 	5 of 5	0 of 5	0 of 5
3. Protected Characteristics <i>(including Welsh Language)</i>	0 of 10	0 of 10	10 of 10
4. Biodiversity	0 of 1	0 of 1	1 of 1
<p>Summary: The main positive impacts are the development and improvement of services for children and young people.</p> <p>There are no negative impacts.</p>			

LISA CURTIS JONES
CHIEF OFFICER (SOCIAL SERVICES)

COUNCILLOR CHRIS DAVIES
CABINET MEMBER FOR
SOCIAL SERVICES

BACKGROUND PAPERS		
Title of Document(s)	Document(s) Date	Document Location
Vale, Valleys And Cardiff Adoption Collaborative (VVC) Annual Report for 1 st April 2019 to 31 st March 2020	October 2020	
Does the report contain any issue that may impact the Council's Constitution?		No

Consultation has been undertaken with the Corporate Management Team in respect of each proposal(s) and recommendation(s) set out in this report.