

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE REPORT

Date Written	March 2022
Report Author	Taryn Stephens
Service Area	Children's Services
Committee Date	29 th March 2022

To: Chair, Ladies and Gentlemen

Vale, Valleys and Cardiff (VVC) Adoption Collaborative Annual Report for 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021

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 2020-21.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

2.1 Scrutiny Committee is asked to receive this report and to raise questions and challenge leading to improvement.

3.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

3.1 The Vale, Valleys and Cardiff Adoption Collaborative (VVC) is the largest of the five regional collaboratives. The Vale, Valleys and Cardiff Adoption Collaborative (VVC), as part of the National Adoption Service in Wales (NAS) was established on 1st June 2015. 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.

- 3.2 The Regional Adoption Management Board meets monthly and receives updates in relation to the work of the business plan, performance reporting, 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.
- 3.3 The service functions include:
- Recruitment and Assessment of Adopters.
 - Adoption Panel.
 - Family Finding.
 - Adoption Support.
 - Transitions and Life Journey Work support.
- 3.4 This is VVC's sixth annual report and covers the period 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021. The Collaborative is required to review the service it provides by regulation, and as part of the reporting requirements set out in the legal agreement underpinning the operation of the collaborative. The Report seeks to combine the various reporting requirements in one report.
- 3.5 The report provides:
- information in respect of the governance;
 - information on areas of service development;
 - performance information relating to the placement of children for adoption, recruitment and assessment of adopters;
 - the provision of adoption support services;
 - an overview on the impact of COVID 19 on service delivery and how the service adapted to respond to these challenges;
 - highlights key challenges and future priorities for the service in terms of maintaining core business but also embracing changes being brought about at a national level with the implementation of Good Practice Guides and the two stage model of adopter assessment; and
 - The appendices to the report provide data in respect of key performance measures in respect of children, marketing activity, adopter recruitment, adoption support and the Adoption Panel. It also highlights activity in respect of the new grant funded posts. This information is broken down by local authority.
- 3.6 A bi-annual report has also been provided by the VVC which covers Quarters 1 and 2 of 2021/2022 (attached as Appendix 2). Whilst the primary report is the VVC's annual report, Children's Services and the VVC are mindful of ensuring that Scrutiny Committee have timely information so have included the bi-annual report.
- 3.7 The report is attached at Appendix 1 with data appendices 2-5 also included as follows:
- Appendix 1.1 Family Finding Data
 - Appendix 1.2 Recruitment and Assessment Data
 - Appendix 1.3 Adoption Support Data
 - Appendix 1.4 Adoption Panel Data

4.0 NEXT STEPS

4.1 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.

5.0 CONTRIBUTION TO WELLBEING OBJECTIVES

5.1 This report specifically links to the Living Well objective within the Council's Corporate Wellbeing Plan: People are empowered to live independently within their Communities, where they are safe and enjoy good physical and mental health.

LISA CURTIS JONES
DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES

COUNCILLOR TONY RODGERS
CABINET MEMBER FOR
SOCIAL SERVICES

BACKGROUND PAPERS		
Title of Document(s)	Document(s) Date	Document Location
	October 2021	
Does the report contain any issue that may impact the Council's Constitution?		No