

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL**CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & FAMILIES****DATE: 5 NOVEMBER 2019****LEAD OFFICER: DAVE HILL, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES, LIFELONG LEARNING AND CULTURE****SUBJECT: ADOPTION REPORT & STATEMENT OF PURPOSE 2018/19****COMMUNITY VISION OUTCOME: People****SUMMARY OF ISSUE:**

The Surrey Adoption Service Annual Report (2018/19) and Statement of Purpose seek to provide members with a review of adoption services in Surrey for 2018/19, including information as to the key issues for the Service and statistical data regarding the Service's performance in key areas including:

- Timeliness of adoption for children with an adoption plan
- Surrey's performance based on the Department of Education's Scorecard
- Recruitment of adopters
- Post order support for Surrey adoptive families

This annual review will be the last before the Adoption Services of Surrey, Brighton and Hove, West Sussex and East Sussex Councils all join together to become Adoption South East, a Regional Adoption Agency, a unified entity hosted by East Sussex that will oversee adoption services for the South East region.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that the Cabinet Member notes the content of the Annual Report and associated Statement of Purpose.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Adoption & Children Act 2002 requires that Local Authority Adoption Agencies present regular reports of agency activity to elected Members. This report captures activity of the Surrey Adoption Service for the period April 1 2018 to March 31 2019.

DETAILS:

1. Please refer to the Adoption Annual Report (Annex 1) and Surrey Adoption Service Statement of Purpose 2019 (Annex 2).

CONSULTATION:

2. This report was submitted to the Performance Leadership Team on 2 October 2019 and was approved.

RISK MANAGEMENT AND IMPLICATIONS:

3. This report does not highlight any financial risk as it is a summary of the performance of the Surrey Adoption Service for the year 2018/19 (1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019).

Financial and Value for Money Implications

4. There are no financial implication based upon the 2018/19 review.

Section 151 Officer Commentary

5. The Council's medium-term financial outlook is uncertain as it is heavily dependent on decisions made by Central Government. With no clarity on these beyond 2020/21, our working assumption is that financial resources will continue to be constrained, as they have been for the majority of the past decade. This places an onus on the Council to continue to consider issues of financial sustainability as a priority in order to ensure stable provision of services in the medium term. As such, the Section 151 Officer notes the detail in this report and the Finance team will work with the service to monitor the transition to the new Adoption South East (ASE) arrangements.

Legal Implications – Monitoring Officer

6. The Annual Report and associated Statement of Purpose are provided for the information of Members as an exercise of the Council's children's social care functions in respect of adoption, carried out by the Surrey Adoption Service. In accordance with the requirements of the Adoption and Children Act 2002, and associated Regulations, information should be provided to elected Members with regard to the activities of adoption services on a regular basis.
7. Neither document requires a decision.
8. In accordance with the above legislative requirements, following Members' consideration, both documents will be made publicly available.
9. On 9 July 2019, Cabinet approval was granted for Surrey County Council's participation in the creation of a Regional Adoption Agency (RAA) to be known as Adoption South East (ASE) in partnership with Brighton and Hove City Council, and East and West Sussex County Councils. Authority was delegated to the Executive Director for Children, Families, Lifelong Learning and Culture in consultation with the Lead Member for Children, Young People and Families to take any action necessary or incidental to the above including entering into and signing off the Partnership Agreement and any other agreement between Surrey County Council and the participating Authorities in order for the Regional Adoption arrangement to be implemented by 2020.

Equalities and Diversity

10. An Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) has not been completed as the report focuses on the performance of the service during 2018/19.
11. An EIA was undertaken in respect of the establishment of the Regional Adoption Service, Adoption South East.

Other Implications

12. The potential implications for the following Council priorities and policy areas have been considered. Where the impact is potentially significant a summary of the issues is set out in detail below.

Area assessed:	Direct Implications:
Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children	Present and future Implications are highlighted below

Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children implications

13. Surrey’s Adoption Service aims to secure adoption in a timely manner for children unable to live within their family of origin, particularly those for whom the authority has corporate parenting responsibilities. It strives to offer Surrey’s children placements through adoption when this is needed, in a timely manner through recruiting a diverse pool of well-prepared prospective adopters from which to seek a match, thus achieving a positive impact for those children, and releasing foster care resources to the benefit of other children.
14. The Service also provides support to all those living in Surrey affected by adoption, in accordance with statutory responsibilities and recognition that adoption confers life-long challenges for adoptees, adoptive families and birth families.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

15. Once Cabinet approval is given, the Adoption Annual Report and Standard of Purpose will be published and made available to all who are interested in adoption through and support services provided by the Surrey Adoption Service.

Contact Officer:

Barrymore James, Service Manager – Adoption (01483 404 969)

Consulted:

Adoption Staff, Children’s Services, Performance Leadership Team

Annexes:

Annex 1 – Adoption Annual Report 2018/19

Annex 2 – Adoption Statement of Purpose (September 2019)

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