

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Report

Panel:	Children and Families Advisory Panel
Date:	10 th October 2022
Title:	Adopt South – Annual Report 2021-2022 with Hampshire County Council Highlights
Report From:	Steve Crocker – Director of Children’s Services

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Purpose of this Report

1. This report and film outlines the activity of Adopt South, the Regional Adoption Agency for Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth and Southampton local authorities for the financial year 2021-2022.

Recommendation

2. That the Annual Report 2020-2021 for Adopt South, is noted by the Children and Families Advisory Panel.

Executive Summary

3. This report seeks to present the performance of Adopt South for the financial year 2021-2022 (Year 3), making comparisons on activities since the launch in April 2019.
4. The report also highlights specific reference to Hampshire County Council’s children’s journey which includes:
 - a. 22% increase in Placement Orders compared to Year 2
 - b. 10% increase in children formally linked compared to Year 2
 - c. 8% increase in the number of children placed internally compared to Year 2
 - d. No Hampshire children without potential links
 - e. Scorecards well below the Government’s guidance
5. Adopt South’s Year 3 KPIs include:

- a. Enquiries 23% above 589 target (727)
- b. Achieved 93% RAA Mystery Shopper Score
- c. Adoption Information Sessions - 35% above 383 target (516)
- d. 94% of Registration of Interest Forms- 174 target achieved (164)
- e. 101 Adopters approved – 92% of target
- f. 34% (34) adopters approved for sibling groups
- g. 35% (35) adopters approved for Fostering for Adoption
- h. Average Assessment to Approval Conversion Rate is above target at 66%, against a target of 64%
- i. 9 adopters sold generating £265,289.49 +97% above target
- j. Overall assessment journey 5.4 months (Government target 6 months)
- k. £783,714.82 approved by the Adoption Support Fund +59% on Year 2
- l. £45,726 of income generated from therapeutic courses
- m. 220 children with families identified + 47% on Y2
- n. 117 of these have been Hard to Place (53% of total) +89% on Y2
- o. 93 children have been formally linked to 77 families
- p. 37 sibling groups have had families identified +61% on Y2
- q. 18 children over the age of 5 years
- r. 25 children placed in Fostering for Adoption placements - £67,000 saving to LAs
- s. Just 6 children with no potential links
- t. Just 4 children placed externally at £120,689 (only 48% of budget)

Contextual information

- 6. In 2015, the Department of Education (DoE) released a Parliamentary Paper, which recommended a move towards grouping neighbouring adoption services into Regional Adoption Agencies (RAA) to improve practice and performance. By 2017, there was a recommendation that local authorities would operate their adoption services in a cluster or group of local authorities within 18 months.
- 7. In April 2019, Adopt South was launched. The Regional Adoption Agency is a partnership which includes Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth and Southampton local authorities.

Performance

- 8. Since launch, Adopt South has improved the outcomes for many children who cannot live with their birth families.
 - a. 518 children have had families identified
 - b. 223 of these children have been Hard to Place
 - c. 319 children formally linked
 - d. 339 new adoptive families approved
 - e. Stage 1 Timescales 1.7 months (Government target is two months)
 - f. Stage 2 Timescales 3.7 months (Government target is four months)

9. How does Adopt South compare to 32 RAAs (*ASGLB data April 2021 – March 2022):
- a. Placed more children in-house than any other RAA
 - b. Very low interagency placements
 - c. Only RAA achieving Enquiry to Registration of Interest in five-day timescale
 - d. Fastest enquiry to approval than any other RAA
 - e. 3rd highest number of approved adopters
 - f. Only RAA achieving Stage 1 in timescales
 - g. 1 of only four RAA's achieving Stage 2 in timescales
 - h. Lowest timescales from Placement to Adoption Order
 - i. 1 of only two RAA's in Scorecard 1 timescale
 - j. In top five for Scorecard 2
 - k. In top six for Fostering for Adoption placements

Appendix

10. Adopt South's 2021-2022 Annual Report
11. Link here to [Adopt South - End of Year Film - 2021-22](#)

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	no
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	yes
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	no
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	yes

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

Document

Location

None

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

1. Equality Duty

The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

2. Equalities Impact Assessment:

This report is an information update for the Children and Families Advisory Panel and therefore no impact has been identified.