

**VALE, VALLEYS & CARDIFF REGIONAL ADOPTION SERVICE – Performance
Report 2020 – 2021**

Reasons for the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with a copy of the Vale, Valleys and Cardiff (VVC) Regional Adoption Collaborative performance Report 2020/21. A copy is attached at **Appendix A**

2. As a key part of the implementation of the Social Services and Well Being Act (Wales) 2014, the National Adoption Service for Wales was created to bring together existing local government services into a three tier system, with partnership arrangements for services provided in other sectors, to coordinate and deliver adoption services in a different way. These tiers are:
 - Local authority level – where all local authorities will continue to identify and meet needs of children for whom adoption is the most appropriate plan;

 - Regional level – where five local authority collaboratives have been created to deliver agreed adoption functions and develop operational links, as appropriate, with voluntary sector and other services to develop and improve service delivery; and

 - National level – a small team to co-ordinate and drive improvement and consistency, while maintaining strategic and planning links with Voluntary Adoption Agencies (VAAs) and the delivery of certain national functions.

3. The Vale, Valleys & Cardiff Adoption Collaborative (VVC) brings together the adoption services of the Vale of Glamorgan Council, Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council, Cardiff Council and Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council. It is one of the five regional Collaboratives which form part of the National Adoption Service in Wales (NAS). The Vale of Glamorgan Council host the Regional Collaborative.

4. In March 2015, Welsh Government published the (Joint Adoption Arrangements) (Wales) Directions 2015, known as “The Directions Powers”, which prescribe the regional areas and the governance structure for the service at a national and regional level. The merger of the adoption services within the region in June 2015 was the culmination of much co-ordinated effort and joint working on the part of all partners in progressing the plan to implement the service.

VVC Priorities for 2020/21

5. There were a number of priorities for the Vale, Valleys & Cardiff Adoption Collaborative and the information below contains an update in respect of each of them
 - The need to continue to recruit more adoptive parents to meet the needs of children requiring placements will remain constant features of the service we provide. Considerable improvement in both these areas was achieved during the reporting period which hopefully can be built upon year on year

 - The ongoing challenge for the service is being able convert more (prospective adopters) enquiries into applications to ensure that they continue to build on its existing pool of adopters and to improve placement choice.

- Following successful recruitment into specialist roles. These posts will continue to be evaluated in terms of service improvement and therefore will need to be further embedded across the region to ensure that performance targets are met. This is particularly important in respect of the provision of life journey work for the region due to the large amount of the investment secured for this work.
- Just prior to the end of the reporting period the impact of the pandemic and national lockdown was beginning to take effect with 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. This has enabled key functions to continue to be delivered although it is too early to assess the impact upon overall performance during this year. Going forward the service will need to continue to evaluate the effect upon services and develop plans to mitigate the overall impact upon service delivery.

Financial Implications

6. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

Legal Implications

7. There are no legal implications arising from this report.

RECOMMENDATION

8. The Committee are recommended to note the Vale, Valleys and Cardiff Adoption Collaborative (VVC) performance report and to make any observations or comments.

DEBORAH DRIFFIELD
DIRECTOR OF CHILDRENS SERVICES

14 JULY 2021

Appendix A - Valleys and Cardiff (VVC) Regional Adoption Collaborative performance Report 2020/21.