



## Agenda for a meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel to be held on Monday, 22 July 2019 at 4.30 pm in Committee Room 1 - City Hall, Bradford

### Members of the Committee – Councillors

LABOUR	CONSERVATIVE	LIBERAL DEMOCRAT
Thirkill Farley Tait	D Smith	Humphreys

### Alternates:

LABOUR	CONSERVATIVE	LIBERAL DEMOCRAT
Mohammed Nazir Shafiq	Pollard	Stubbs

### Notes:

- This agenda can be made available in Braille, large print or tape format on request by contacting the Agenda contact shown below.
- The taking of photographs, filming and sound recording of the meeting is allowed except if Councillors vote to exclude the public to discuss confidential matters covered by Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. Recording activity should be respectful to the conduct of the meeting and behaviour that disrupts the meeting (such as oral commentary) will not be permitted. Anyone attending the meeting who wishes to record or film the meeting's proceedings is advised to liaise with the Agenda Contact who will provide guidance and ensure that any necessary arrangements are in place. Those present who are invited to make spoken contributions to the meeting should be aware that they may be filmed or sound recorded.
- If any further information is required about any item on this agenda, please contact the officer named at the foot of that agenda item.

### From:

Parveen Akhtar  
City Solicitor  
Agenda Contact: Yusuf Patel  
Phone: 01274 434579  
E-Mail: [yusuf.patel@bradford.gov.uk](mailto:yusuf.patel@bradford.gov.uk)

### To:

## **A. PROCEDURAL ITEMS**

### **1. ALTERNATE MEMBERS (Standing Order 34)**

The City Solicitor will report the names of alternate Members who are attending the meeting in place of appointed Members.

(Yusuf Patel – 01274 434579)

### **2. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST**

(Members Code of Conduct - Part 4A of the Constitution)

To receive disclosures of interests from members and co-opted members on matters to be considered at the meeting. The disclosure must include the nature of the interest.

An interest must also be disclosed in the meeting when it becomes apparent to the member during the meeting.

*Notes:*

- (1) Members may remain in the meeting and take part fully in discussion and voting unless the interest is a disclosable pecuniary interest or an interest which the Member feels would call into question their compliance with the wider principles set out in the Code of Conduct. Disclosable pecuniary interests relate to the Member concerned or their spouse/partner.*
- (2) Members in arrears of Council Tax by more than two months must not vote in decisions on, or which might affect, budget calculations, and must disclose at the meeting that this restriction applies to them. A failure to comply with these requirements is a criminal offence under section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.*
- (3) Members are also welcome to disclose interests which are not disclosable pecuniary interests but which they consider should be made in the interest of clarity.*
- (4) Officers must disclose interests in accordance with Council Standing Order 44.*

(Yusuf Patel – 01274 434579)

### 3. MINUTES

**Recommended –**

**That the minutes of the meeting held on 15 March 2019 be signed as a correct record (previously circulated).**

(Yusuf Patel – 01274 434579)

### 4. INSPECTION OF REPORTS AND BACKGROUND PAPERS

(Access to Information Procedure Rules – Part 3B of the Constitution)

Reports and background papers for agenda items may be inspected by contacting the person shown after each agenda item. Certain reports and background papers may be restricted.

Any request to remove the restriction on a report or background paper should be made to the relevant Strategic Director or Assistant Director whose name is shown on the front page of the report.

If that request is refused, there is a right of appeal to this meeting.

Please contact the officer shown below in advance of the meeting if you wish to appeal.

(Yusuf Patel - 01274 434579)

## B. BUSINESS ITEMS

### 5. APPOINTMENT OF NON-VOTING CO-OPTED MEMBERS

The Panel will be asked to consider the appointment of Non-Voting Co-opted Members for the 2019/20 Municipal Year and to make a recommendation to the Regulatory and Appeals Committee.

**Recommended –**

**That it be recommended to the Regulatory and Appeals Committee that the appointment of Non-Voting Co-opted Members to the Panel for the 2019/20 municipal year be confirmed as set out below:**

- **Inspector Kevin Taylor – West Yorkshire Police**
- **Vacancy – Education**
- **Sue Thompson – Bradford District Clinical Commissioning Group**
- **Chair of the Children in Care Council**

(Yusuf Patel – 01274 434579)

6. **CHILDREN PLACED OUT OF BRADFORD** 1 - 8
- The Assistant Director (Performance, Commissioning & Partnerships) will submit a report (**Document “A”**) which sets out the numbers of children; services offered; challenges and sufficiency plans.
- Recommended –**
- The views of the Panel on the option set out in Section 9 of Document “A” are requested.**
- (David Byrom - 01274 432986)
7. **CITIZENSHIP/ACCESS TO PASSPORTS FOR CHILDREN IN CARE AND CARE LEAVERS AND BREXIT IMPLICATIONS** 9 - 12
- The Assistant Director (Performance, Commissioning & Partnerships) will submit a report (**Document “B”**) which provides an update from the report submitted in September 2019 regarding issues of Citizenship and Passports for Children who are in Care in particular regarding children who are EU Citizens and plans to apply for Settled Status or citizenship for those children.
- Recommended –**
- The Corporate Parenting Panel are asked to note the report.**
- (Rachel Curtis - 01274 435779)
8. **ONE ADOPTION WEST YORKSHIRE ANNUAL REPORT** 13 - 66
- The Assistant Director (Performance, Commissioning & Partnerships) will submit a report (**Document “C”**) which sets out the annual report of the work of One Adoption West Yorkshire.
- Recommended –**
- That the Corporate Parenting Panel receives this report and continues to support the work of One Adoption West Yorkshire and the local authority to ensure our adopted children and families receive the best possible support.**
- (Michelle Rawlings - 0113 535 0913)
9. **WORK PLAN 2019/2020** 67 - 72
- The Panel’s Work Plan for 2019/20 is submitted for Member’s consideration (**Document “D”**).



**Report of the Assistant Director (Performance,  
Commissioning & Partnerships) to the meeting of the  
Corporate Parenting Panel to be held on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2019**

**A**

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**Subject:**

**CHILDREN PLACED OUT OF BRADFORD**

**Summary statement:**

Report on the numbers of children; services offered; challenges and sufficiency plans

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Assistant Director  
(Performance, Commissioning &  
Partnerships)

Report Contact: David Byrom  
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**Portfolio:**

Children & Families

**Overview & Scrutiny Area:**

Children & Families

## 1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The LA has a duty to secure, so far as reasonably practicable, sufficient accommodation within its area to meet the need of children whose circumstances are such that it would be consistent with their welfare for them to be provided with accommodation in the local authority area. This is referred to as 'the sufficiency duty'.

This applies for children who are looked after including accommodation for care leavers.

## 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 There has been a significant rise in the number of CLA over the last 15 months; the current number CLA is 1202.

This is a 23.2% increase, of this increase 15.8% are aged between 10-17.

### 2.2 Provision

- 2.2.1 There is a good level of own provision compared to purchased provision.

63% of provision of accommodation for CLA is provided by the local authority.

#### 2.2.3 Comparison

Statistical Neighbours – 53%

England Average – 53%

(Children Services Analysis Tool (ChAT May 2019))

### 2.3 Type

Type	Internal	External
Foster Placement	367	125
Friends & Family Placement	342	-
Placed with Parents	149	-
Children's Home	50	53
Placed for Adoption	2	20
Independent Living	2	80
Custody, Mother & Baby, Supported Lodgings & Hospital	2	10

### 2.4 CLA Placed out of Area

- 2.4.1 CLA are placed out of area for a number of reasons, some move to Bradford placements in foster care that are outside the 20 mile boundary counted for this indicator. These will be Bradford foster carers or connected friends and family placements.

**2.4.2** Some young people are placed outside of Bradford due to known risks that are apparent and as part of their care plan.

**2.4.3** Over the last 12 months there has been a significant increase in the number of CLA placed into purchased provision purely because of the availability of placements in area, a number of these will be outside of Bradford.

**2.4.4** Internally Childrens Homes placements have remained static, placements into internal fostering since January 2018 has risen by 23%, placements in external purchased fostering has risen by 110%. Placements made in purchased Children home provision has raised by 35%. The number of CLA placed into a purchased provision has risen by 92% since January 2018.

**2.4.5** The current costs associated with these 216 purchased placements is 15.74m based on a full year projected cost.

## **2.5 Location of Placements**

**2.5.1** The graphs below show all CLA placed more than 20 miles from the Bradford boundary.

### **CLA in our Foster Care provision Placed out of area (F&F)**

Cheshire	1
Cleveland	1
Co. Durham	1
Confidential	1
East Riding of Yorkshire	4
Lancashire	2
Leicestershire	1
Lincolnshire	3
Liverpool	1
NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE	1
North East Lincolnshire	1
North Humberside	4
North Yorkshire	3
Northamptonshire	1
Northumberland	1
Nottingham	3
Scotland	3
South Yorkshire	3
West Yorkshire	42
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>77</b>

### **CLA in purchased provision out of area**

Cheshire	1
Co. Durham	5
Cumbria	2
Durham	1
Greater Manchester	4
Kent	2
Lancashire	19
Lincolnshire	4
Norfolk	1
North Humberside	3
North Lincolnshire	1
North Yorkshire	3
Scotland	1
South Yorkshire	6
St Helens	1
Staffordshire	1
Warwickshire	2
West Yorkshire	63
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>120</b>

## 2.6 % of CLA placed more that 20 miles for their homes outside the Bradford boundary

LA, Region and England	2016	2017	2018	2019
Bradford	10.00	11.00	10.00	10.10
Yorkshire & Humberside	14.00	14.00	14.00	-
Statistical Neighbours	14.30	15.00	18.75	-
England	14.00	14.00	15.00	-

## 2.7 The Private Sector

**2.7.1** CLA numbers are rising locally and nationally, there are a finite number of external providers of foster care and more importantly residential care. Data from the Independent Childrens Home Association shows that there are on average between 400 / 500 referrals per month nationally to the private residential sector.

**2.7.2** This often means that despite a children social care referral stating a specific need there may be no availability and the best available placement will be taken. This can mean that children and young people are placed at distance into a setting that might not be the best match. There are a number of actions in place to try to address this including developing more flexible provision locally; working with the market to have more local provision and increasing the number of in- house Foster Carers

**2.7.3** Bradford utilises the White Rose Framework to commission placements wherever possible however often no option is available. This has meant a number of off framework placements have been made and a rise in the use of unregulated placements.

There have been increasing circumstances of permission to accommodate a young person being given by Head of Service and no placement being available. This effectively means a child or young person remaining in the current placement.

**2.7.5** Bradford has a block contract of 10 beds with a provider called Hexagon., and utilises these within homes in Bradford. This has recently been reviewed and extended for a further year. As part of the review it increased from 8 beds to 10 as it is good quality provision and the block contract is more cost effective. The commissioning team is currently reviewing to see fi there are further opportunities to use block contracts.

## **Key Issues**

### **2.8.1 Managing Risk**

**2.8.2** When CLA are placed into a private children's home out of area, it is important that a risk assessment is undertaken with the local Police, placements teams and safeguarding team in the LA to ensure that they are aware a young person is being placed into area. A written notification is sent to the LA so that the CLA nursing team, Virtual School and Local Authority are aware. This is supposed to also happen when a child is placed in Bradford from another authority, but does not always consistently do so. This is being addressed through individual conversations with local authorities and raising this through regional and national networks.

**2.8.3** The SW should ensure that a team around the child meeting is held promptly so that a strategy can be developed to safeguard the young person.

**2.8.4** Bradford have experienced a number of situations in out of area placements where the local Police to an external children's home have put significant pressure on the home when a young person has been going missing or risk is seen to be escalating. Ultimately this can result in placement disruption; providers are run as businesses and are Ofsted registered and police concern may trigger a poor Ofsted judgement. An inadequate inspection outcome for a private provider will mean that LA's will not place their children. As a result placements end often with limited notice.

### **2.9 Support**

**2.9.1** When Children are placed at distance support to the placement when problems are occurring cannot easily be provided, SW's undertake statutory visits on a monthly basis and these are increased when needed however distance from Bradford does mean that young people can be isolated at times when they need increased support.

**2.9.2** This is more apparent in the following areas:

- Contact with family and friends
- Accessing local CAMHS services
- Accessing education

**2.9.3** A social worker will be expected to refer into and build relationships with local agencies to support the placement, the virtual school and SEN teams will support as will Bradford CAMHS. There are however often delays in being able to access services for young people when they move into a new area and new referrals need to be made.

## **2.10 Quality of Placements**

**2.10.1** All external placements have an individual placement agreement (IPA) which outlines the provision and outcomes that are expected.

**2.10.2** The placement coordination team will undertake contract management checks, however the reality is that it is the Social Worker and Independent Reviewing officer that visit the placement, speak to staff and the young person and escalate concerns back to service when issues arise.

**2.10.3** A review is currently underway to strengthen these arrangements, it is rare that escalations happen and this needs to become part of our internal quality assurance process to ensure support is put into placements when needed and that providers are held to account for the IPA that has been agreed. Placement Coordination will contact providers to address concerns.

## **2.11 Sufficiency Plans**

**2.11.1** A strand of the improvement plan is to increase local sufficiency; this covers a number of areas

- Increase internal fostering
- Revise emergency fostering offer
- Increase local Children Homes capacity
- Ensure sustainability of B Positive Pathways
- Reduce length of time in care by effective permanence planning
- Revise commissioning strategy
- Sustain build on Mockingbird Family Model

All of these areas are being worked on to deliver improved local sufficiency.

## **3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

**3.1** None

## **4. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL**

**4.1.1** There are significant costs associated with purchased provision, the sufficiency plans are to re align this funding in more innovative local solutions ensuring wherever possible CLA remain in local provision and do not experience multiple placements.

## **5. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES**

**5.1** The sufficiency work plan is part of the ofsted improvement plan and governance is through the improvement board.

**6. LEGAL APPRAISAL**

6.1 No legal issues

**7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

**7.1 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY**

7.1.1 This report evidences the increasing numbers children that we are caring for and the service is developing to meet the needs of this diverse group of children

**7.2 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

Not applicable

**7.3 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS**

Not applicable

**7.4 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

Not applicable

**7.5 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT**

Not applicable

**7.6 TRADE UNION**

Not applicable

**7.7 WARD IMPLICATIONS**

To be discussed with ward councillors at the point agreement is reached on the proposed site for new provision.

**7.8 AREA COMMITTEE ACTION PLAN IMPLICATIONS**

None

**7.9 IMPLICATIONS FOR CORPORATE PARENTING**

CLA being placed at distance from Bradford should raise a number of concerns for the corporate parenting panel, support to these young people and ensuring that the quality of the provision is monitored is paramount, increasing the use of technology to remain in contact with CLA such as face time and Skype should be explored wider in the council. These tools are the norm for young people and professionals also should embrace innovation as a way of remaining in touch to compliment routine visits. Currently not all social workers are able to access this relevant IT when away from the office.

## **7.10 ISSUES ARISING FROM PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESMENT**

None.

## **8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS**

None.

## **9. OPTIONS**

That the corporate parenting board support the work being undertaken in the sufficiency plan to improve the level of provision locally.

## **10. RECOMMENDATIONS**

The views of the CPP on the option set out in Section 9 of this report are requested.

## **11. APPENDICES**

None.

## **12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

None.



**Report of the Assistant Director (Performance,  
Commissioning & Partnerships) to the meeting of the  
Corporate Parenting Panel to be held on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2019**

**B**

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**Subject:**

**CITIZENSHIP/ACCESS TO PASSPORTS FOR CHILDREN IN CARE AND  
CARE LEAVERS AND BREXIT IMPLICATIONS**

**Summary statement:**

This report provides an update from the report submitted in September 2019 regarding issues of Citizenship and Passports for Children who are in Care in particular regarding children who are EU Citizens and plans to apply for Settled Status or citizenship for those children.

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Assistant Director  
(Performance, Commissioning &  
Partnerships)

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**Portfolio:**

Children & Families

**Overview & Scrutiny Area:**

Children & Families

## 1. SUMMARY

This report provides an update of the work that is undertaken by social workers to ensure the children in our care have the appropriate identity documentation to allow them to travel, and the work undertaken to ensure that their immigration status is appropriately addressed particularly in light of the plans for Brexit.

## 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In Bradford we now have 1211 children who are looked after. Of these children a number are not UK citizens, either being asylum seekers or refugees, or children who are EU Nationals. There have historically been some difficulties in accessing passports and paperwork to enable EU National children to travel abroad with their carers.  
With the approach of Brexit we need to ensure the paperwork for all EU national children in care is in place and applications are in place for Settled Status.
- 2.2 We are currently caring for 59 children who are EU nationals. For some of these children, where their permanence plan is that they will remain looked after separate from their family, and their plans are that they will live in the UK; plans are put in place to apply for British Citizenship. This is addressed in looked after child reviews every 6 months.
- 2.3 For children who continue to live within their own family, or continue to have significant links with their family and home country, it is important that they have the necessary paperwork and identity papers, and that an application for Settled Status is made. The application itself is free, but the documents needed to prove eligibility such as birth certificates and passports do cost money if they are not already in place.
- 2.4 Due to the issues that lead to children becoming looked after, often parents do not have the necessary paperwork or refuse to give this to the social worker. Social workers therefore need to work to get hold of the necessary documentation and if the families do not have the paperwork new copies are needed. This is not straightforward and involves working with the individual embassies or consulates and the children being seen at the embassy (usually in London). Passports cannot be issued without identity papers and birth certificates.
- 2.5 We have examples of some creative work being undertaken to ensure children have identity papers and passports to allow them to go on school trips for example. One girl missed a trip funded by a charity to go to Disneyland Paris last year, as the French authorities would not accept the travel card she had been issued. Getting a new passport and identity card through the Slovakian Embassy was proving exceptionally difficult however the Embassy pointed out this could be done much more quickly in Slovakia. A plan was put together whereby the child travelled to Slovakia with her foster carer and her parents travelled separately, they all attended the necessary offices in Prague, and she was issued with a new passport in 24 hours. She was then able to go on the trip to Disneyland.

- 2.6 The Settled Status application scheme opened at the end of March and plans are being put in place for children in care to apply for Settled Status, however to submit the application the child needs all the necessary documentation so the focus now is on ensuring this is in place first. As previously stated this is not straight forward.
- 2.7 The delay in Brexit has meant that the work regarding applying for Settled Status has become less of a priority but it does still need to happen. All workers of children who are EU migrants have been asked to meet with the Through Care Service Manager in July to update on plans and progress regarding Settled Status or Citizenship for the children they are working with.

### **3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

Not applicable.

### **4. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL**

- 4.1 The cost of citizenship applications are at least £1,000 per child. Significant costs can also be incurred through travel to embassies in London. In addition, legal costs need to be met and there is a shortage of Legal Advisors who specialise in children's asylum and immigration issues.

### **5. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES**

None.

### **6. LEGAL APPRAISAL**

None.

### **7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

#### **7.1 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY**

This report evidences the increased diversity of the children that we are caring for and the service is developing to meet the needs of this diverse group of children

#### **7.2 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

Not applicable.

#### **7.3 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS**

Not applicable.

#### **7.4 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

Not applicable.

**7.5 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT**

Not applicable.

**7.6 TRADE UNION**

Not applicable.

**7.7 WARD IMPLICATIONS**

Not applicable.

**7.8 AREA COMMITTEE ACTION PLAN IMPLICATIONS  
(for reports to Area Committees only)**

Not applicable.

**7.9 IMPLICATIONS FOR CORPORATE PARENTING**

Corporate parents will need to be kept updated regarding the issues relating to EU children in care as a result of Brexit, any issues relating to applying for Settled Status for these children and ensuring that EU children in care are supported to enjoy and achieve positive outcomes in our care.

**7.10 ISSUES ARISING FROM PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESMENT**

Not applicable.

**8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS**

None.

**9. OPTIONS**

Not applicable.

**10. RECOMMENDATIONS**

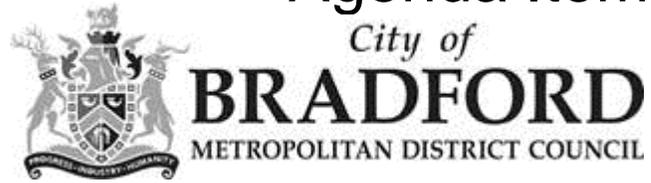
10.1 That the Corporate Parenting Panel are asked to note this report.

**11. APPENDICES**

None.

**12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

<http://www.nrpfnetwork.org.uk/News/Pages/british-citizenship-children.aspx>



## **Report of the Assistant Director (Performance, Commissioning & Partnerships) to the meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel to be held on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2019**

**C**

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### **Subject:**

### **ONE ADOPTION WEST YORKSHIRE ANNUAL REPORT**

### **Summary statement:**

1. Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees and Wakefield adoption functions as specified in the partnership agreement were delegated on the 1st April 2017 to Leeds City Council and One Adoption West Yorkshire (OAWY) formally opened. OAWY was the first Regional Adoption Agency (RAA) to open in the country.
2. This report provides a summary on the developments of the service from April 2018 to March 2019.
3. The completion of the 2nd year as a regional adoption agency has seen the service move forward positively. OAWY has increased the numbers of adopters approved and has maintained the timeliness of children placed for adoption, in spite of a national picture of a decline in both these areas. The development of a range of adoption support services has been welcomed by adopters and the service continues to work with families to address gaps in provision. The staff in the agency are extremely committed and passionate about improving outcomes for children in the region and to being part of a developing a flagship adoption service that promotes and develops best practice.

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Assistant Director  
(Performance, Commissioning &  
Partnerships)

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### **Portfolio:**

Children & Families

### **Overview & Scrutiny Area:**

Children & Families

## **1. SUMMARY**

That the Corporate Parenting Board receive this annual report and continues to support the work of One Adoption West Yorkshire to ensure our children in need of adoption and those adopted, receive the best possible outcomes and support.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees and Wakefield adoption functions as specified in the partnership agreement were delegated on the 1st April 2017 to Leeds City Council & One Adoption West Yorkshire formally opened on this date.
- 2.2 The government continues to drive forward with the structural reform programme regarding regionalising adoption and there are now 15 regional adoption agencies (RAA's) covering a third of all local authorities and another 15 scheduled to go live between April and June 2019.
- 2.3 There are a number of challenges in the adoption system nationally with a decline in adoption decisions for children (ADM), new placement orders granted, children placed for adoption and adoption orders granted. However, at the same time there has been an increase in the number of children waiting with a placement order and the number of children waiting with a placement order 18 months or more.
- 2.4 There has also been a national increase in the average length of time for children waiting with a placement order but not yet placed, between entering care and moving in with adoptive parents (National scorecard Indicator A1) and the local authority receiving a court authority to place and deciding on a match (National scorecard Indicator A2).
- 2.5 The recruitment of adopters nationally is also declining and the gap between the number of children waiting (increasing) and approved adopters waiting (decreasing) is widening. At the same time the government suspended the requirement for agencies to place their children and adopters on the National Adoption Register from the end of March 2018, pending a review to also consider the issues raised in the fostering stocktake about a national register for foster carers.
- 2.6 While it is still early days for regionalisation, a range of qualitative data is becoming available, from Ofsted inspections and the Inception and Scoping Report from Ecorys UK / the Hadley Centre. There are positive indications about improving recruitment, reducing delay and improvements in timeliness in some RAA's. The latter report found that there are signs of positive adopter feedback, and improved adopter recruitment. Linked to this, some RAAs have been able to improve the support for adopters.
- 2.7 The future of the Adoption Support Fund (ASF) remains uncertain and the Secretary of State announced in December 2018 £6m additional funding for the current year and an additional £6m for 2019-2020. The Government is aiming to work closely with the sector to consider long-term children's services funding as part of the 2019 Spending Review, when the government will set out its long-term spending approach.

## **3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

## 3.1 Use of Resources

### 3.1.1 Staffing

The staff group remains largely stable but there has been a changeover in the three service managers within the service with Mary Brudenell emigrating in November, replaced by Michelle Rawlings. One of our other service managers is on long term sick leave and we are in the process of recruiting to fill this post on a temporary basis. There have been some new managers recruited and there has been additional staff recruited in adoption support to meet the demands of the service.

Julia Pearmain, one of the independent adoption panel chairs, has reduced the number of panels she is able to chair and we have therefore recruited a new Panel Chair to provide more flexibility in covering the panels. Andy Stott is an experienced manager with local authorities in the North West and more latterly as the operational manager for Barnardo's across Yorkshire and Humber has joined us for this role.

### 3.1.2 Duty System

Following the rollout of Enterprise Voice technology a revised Duty system came into effect on 2nd July 2018. This means that duty is now rotated between the 3 main office bases in Bradford, Huddersfield and Leeds on a weekly basis. This has reduced the time staff spend travelling to Kernel House and there has been no adverse impact upon the ability to take calls and respond effectively. In fact, it has had a positive effect with staff feeling more positive about this approach with a growing feeling of connectivity across the bases.

### 3.1.3 Accommodation & service delivery

Following a review of the service last year work and taking feedback from staff we have progressed on moving from 5 office bases to 3 locations with touch down space in the other two offices. The staff from the recruitment and assessment team based in Wakefield moved along with other staff from Bradford in February 2019 from Sir Henry Mitchell House to the Margaret McMillan building. Formal agreement has just been reached about space at Huddersfield regarding staff moving from Halifax and it is anticipated that this will take place in August 2019.

Each of the local authorities retain a key service manager and a team manager who link in with the local authority and in family finding the role of the Advanced Practitioner is key in tracking and providing advice to the agency regarding children's planning as well as looking at practice improvement with local authorities. There are also key family finding staff that will maintain established links and build new relationships with teams. However, across the region workers will be deployed flexibly, collapsing boundaries where appropriate and required. OAWY has increased the management capacity from within existing resources to create additional teams in Recruitment and Assessment, Family Finding and Adoption Support. These teams are based out of the Leeds office to reduce travel time, being closer to Wakefield than the Bradford office in the original set up and also reflecting the increased needs across this part of the region in children requiring adoption.

The increase in teams at Kernel House in Leeds is causing pressure on space and

constructive discussions are underway with colleagues and asset management to address space for One Adoption and the looked after children's teams.

### 3.1.5 Information Technology

The IT project team is continuing to work with the teams on developing business processes and integrating forms into the mosaic workflow as well as developing improved reporting from the system. The new adoption support workflow has been implemented to make recording easier and to improve reporting. A monthly reporting meeting is now in place to look at prioritising the development of reports for use within the service, good progress is being made.

The work regarding accessing the local authority systems from a portal on the Leeds laptop remains outstanding. A project manager remains in position to ensure that this work is driven forward and there has been a number of technical and resource led issues that have prevented this from being delivered in Bradford and Calderdale. These issues have been escalated within the local authorities in order for this work to be completed satisfactorily. Kirklees have implemented a new case recording system and we have trained the staff who need access to this system as well as exploring with them the quarterly returns and the portal technology is to be explored in due course. This effectively means that some staff are still using more than one device in these local areas, this is not an efficient use of time, however the matter is being addressed.

### 3.1.6 Budget

In June 2018 there was an increase in the inter agency fees nationally and this has had a significant impact on the 2018/19 budget for OAWY with a request for an increase in the funding from each local authority. The operational accountability of the regional agency is to the Management Board, comprising of senior officers delegated by each Director Children Services and the increase in budget was been agreed by the 5 LA's. The agency is overseen by a Joint Committee of councillors representing the 5 local authorities, who have knowledge of and responsibility for Children's Services. The Joint Committee exercises the corporate parenting role of the Participating Authorities in relation to the functions of One Adoption Agency for West Yorkshire and these issues were discussed and a way forward agreed with them. The final outturn of the budget is reported in section 4.

## **3.2 Partnership working**

### 3.2.1 Operational leads meetings

The responsible officer for adoption in each local authority meets with OAWY senior team every three months and this is a helpful forum to discuss practice and performance issues. The joint commissioning of training across the region has been an issue as the take up has been mixed. There is a mismatch between what operational leads may consider as priorities and what each workforce development leads in each local area see as a priority. It is important that the context of each LA is considered in relation to their practice and it has been agreed that meetings will be held with workforce development leads to discuss the issues and identify a way forward.

Discussions were held regarding the changes in letterbox arrangements and these have moved forward as we streamline the systems supporting this work. A protocol regarding foster care adoptions has been agreed between One Adoption West Yorkshire and across the operational leads group that will improve the timeliness of progressing these.

### 3.2.2 Centre of Excellence Project

This department for education project aims to improve the positive outcomes for children and families through an evidence based multi- agency assessment of need and support, in partnership with children, adopters and others. The project is due to be completed in October 2019 and the multi-disciplinary team are on track with completing the key objectives. They have implemented a Standardised Adoption Support Assessment Framework and the training for this is currently being rolled out across the region. The team are in the final stages of completing a multi-disciplinary model for adoption support in the region and this is due to be shared with key partners in June/July. The funding from the department for education was due to come to an end in October and this has been extended until the end of March 202. Discussions are underway regarding the sustainability of this approach given resource implications, given the positive benefits this model and approach provides for families across the region and further discussions will be taking place with health and local authorities in the coming months

### 3.2.3 Early Permanence Project

The department for education also fund this project run by the voluntary adoption agencies, Barnardos, Adoption Matters and Caritas Care in partnership with One Adoption. Placing children in an early permanence arrangement is growing and the professionals training which is run jointly with Barnardo's is going well with attendance from all Local Authority partners. The concurrency project is well underway with the first family being approved and another in assessment by Adoption Matters and Caritas Care.

### 3.2.4 Meetings with Medical Advisors

The medical advisors across the region meet with One Adoption West Yorkshire (OAWY) staff twice a year. A medical advisor protocol has been implemented and this has been very helpful for all concerned and has been recognised as an exemplar for other RAA's. There are some issues in Bradford and Wakefield regarding medical advisor capacity and the resources available to undertake medicals regarding children's health needs in a timely manner. This has led to some delays for children in progressing care plans and the matters have been discussed within each local authority, with commissioners in health and providers to seek improvements in this regard.

### 3.2.5 Virtual School Heads (VSH)

In August 2018 Local Authorities received funding from the government to implement the new statutory duty and the OAWY management board agreed that the local authorities would top slice the grant by 10% to enable OAWY to work in

partnership with the VSH in implementing new duty across the region. The education worker within OAWY, working as part of the centre of excellence work is ideally placed to work with staff in adoption support to build their knowledge and skill about issues around education that affect children and young people and to provide advice and support to adoptive families. The funding enables the education worker to undertake an agreed programme of work with the VSH's, beyond the timescales for the centre of excellence project. This is pioneering work and is seen as an example of good practice by the Department of Education.

### 3.2.9 Special Guardianship

In July 2018 the management board agreed to another initiative, overseen by One Adoption West Yorkshire, working in partnership with grandparents plus and the five local authorities to provide support to special guardians in the region. This is a project developing a model that has been successful in the North East working with kinship carers providing a strong focus on peer support as a sustainable and effective way to support kinship carers. Two project workers have been recruited and came into post on 1st October 2018 and work has been progressing with the team managers in the fostering services to ensure that all are aware of the service, referral process and to look at identifying appropriate groups/ families to work with. There are positive indications regarding the impact of this work and more information regarding impact and outcomes will be provided in due course.

## 3.3 **Performance Management**

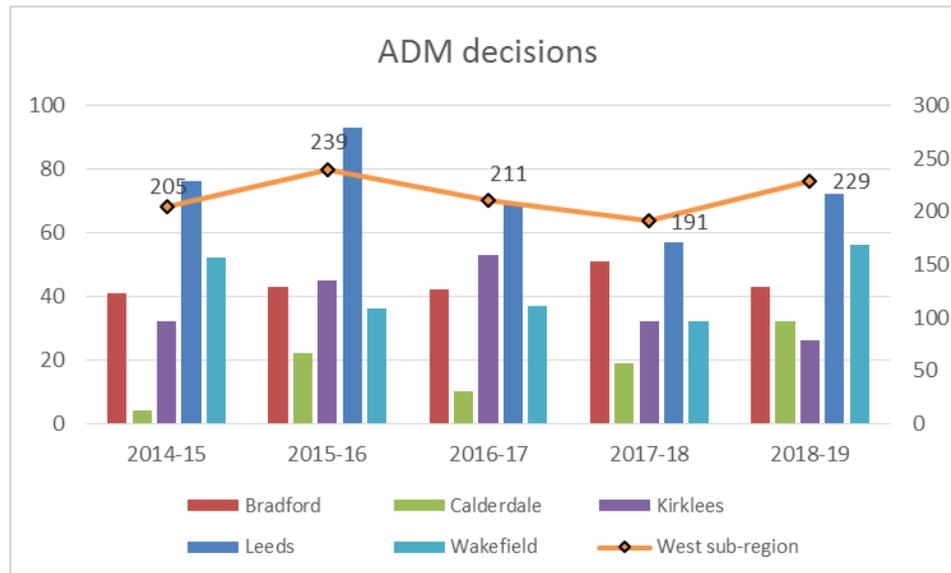
3.3.1 The agency provides quarterly reports to the management board. This data provided has developed over the last 2 years and is gathered to ensure that we are aware of how much work is undertaken, how well was it undertaken and if anyone is any better off. The graphs below show the regional picture for the board and the individual data for Bradford is highlighted in the text. This gives the regional picture and can be useful when wishing to compare and contrast trends and patterns in the adoption system in the region.

**A) Sufficiency:** Are enough of the right kind of adopters being recruited and approved to meet the needs of the children waiting:

### 3.3.2 The children with a plan for adoption during 2018/19

In Bradford between April 2018 and March 2019, 42 children had a plan for adoption ratified by Bradford Agency Decision Makers. Of the 42 children with a plan for adoption, there were 24 female and 18 male children.

In total, this is a 16% increase on the last year's full year figure of 191 children from across the 5 West Yorkshire local authorities. For Bradford, there was an 18% decrease, with 51 children having a plan for adoption the previous year.



### 3.3.3 Ethnicity

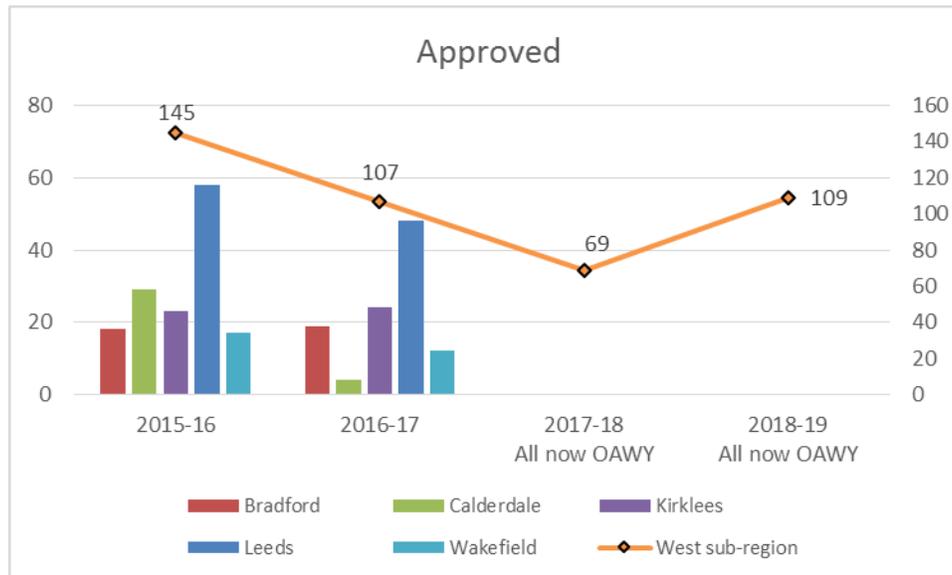
Of the 42 children with a plan for adoption ratified this year, 67% children were from white British backgrounds (including information not obtained) and 14 children (33%) were from Black and Minority Ethnic groups, including children from eastern European, Gypsy Roma, Black African and Black Caribbean backgrounds.

### 3.3.4 Placement with Siblings

As a general principle, siblings will be placed together; however, due to the individual needs of children, this is not always appropriate and cannot always be achieved. It is essential that sibling assessments are carried out to ensure good quality decision making and support plans are evidence based if children are placed together or apart. The numbers of children requiring adoption in sibling groups during the year is 22 children (this includes those with a match and/ or placement). Of the 6 children placed from this cohort during the year 2 were placed apart. A breakdown of the size of the sibling groups is not available as some LAs do not provide a unique reference number for this.

### 3.3.5 Adopter recruitment

109 adoptive households were approved during the year and you will note from the table below that this is an increase of 40 from year-end 2017-18. This takes us slightly above the numbers prior to regionalisation and is encouraging.



Within the 109 households, 206 individuals were approved throughout 2018/19. Of these 22 (11%) are from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) backgrounds. We need to improve our percentage of BME carers and keep a focus on ensuring that we approve a full range of adoptive families to meet the range of children requiring placement, while at the same time not relying on matching children with regard to ethnic identity as an overriding factor. We are undertaking some key focussed work to increase the diverse range of adopters over the next year. Households approved for sibling groups improved this year with 21 households approved for 2 children; 1 approved for a sibling group of 3 and 31 households open to an Early Permanence Placements. There is still more to do around recruiting adopters for sibling groups.

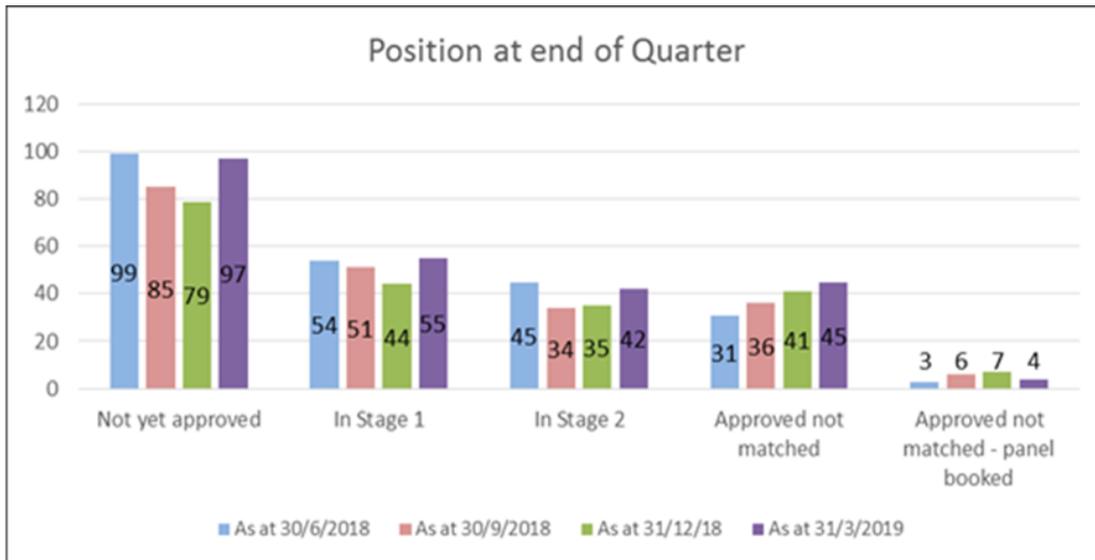
### 3.3.6 Children with an adoption plan

As of the end of March 2019 there are 38 children with a plan for adoption from Bradford not currently placed and requiring adopters. 20 children out of the 38 are under 2 years, 16 are between 2 and 4 years and 2 children are 5 years of age or older. None of these children currently have potential matches identified.

From the children waiting for a placement there are 22 girls and 16 boys, and 32% are children from BME backgrounds. There are 8 sibling groups of 2. The plans for these children are actively reviewed with clear monitoring and tracking systems to understand the range of family finding activity going on for these children and whether adoption remains the right plan for each child. The delays for these children are related primarily to the needs of the children; the need to place siblings together, the age of the children or their particular special needs or complexity.

### 3.3.7 Adopters available

As of the end of March 2019, there are 45 approved adoptive households that have not officially been matched. 32 are available to consider placements (have no links) as 13 have a panel date booked for a match.

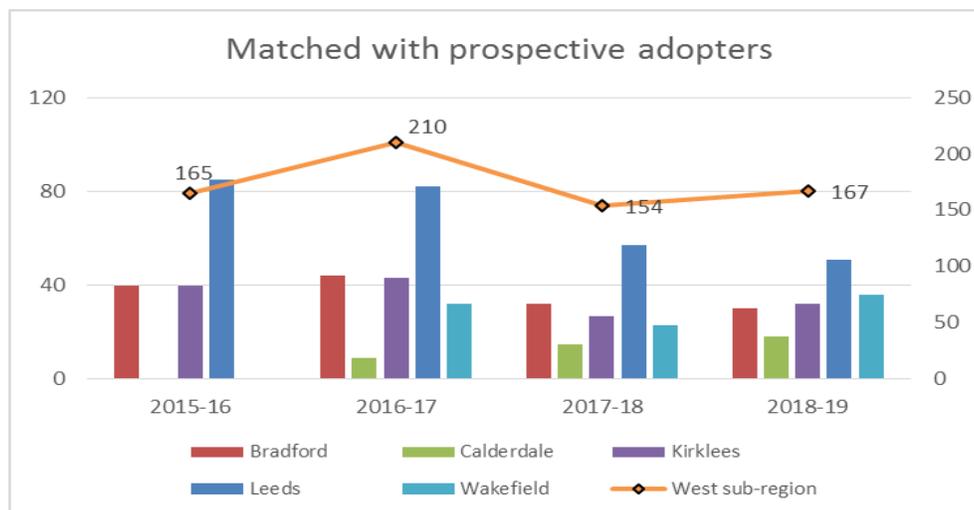


On the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019 97 adopters are in the process of assessment (in stage 1 or 2) although these will take a number of months to become approved. There is a steady increase in those within the assessment process overall.

**B) Timeliness:** Are children being matched and placed without delay including those children who wait longer?

### 3.3.8 Children matched in the year for adoption

Between April 2018 and March 2019, 30 children from Bradford were matched with families at adoption panels; this is a slight decrease from 32 children being matched between April 2017 and March 2018 from Bradford.



From April 2018 to March 2019, 27% of the children matched were from black and minority ethnic (BME) communities.

- 18 of the children matched were under 2 years old;
- 11 children matched were 2 to 4 years old;
- 1 of the children was aged 5 years or older;

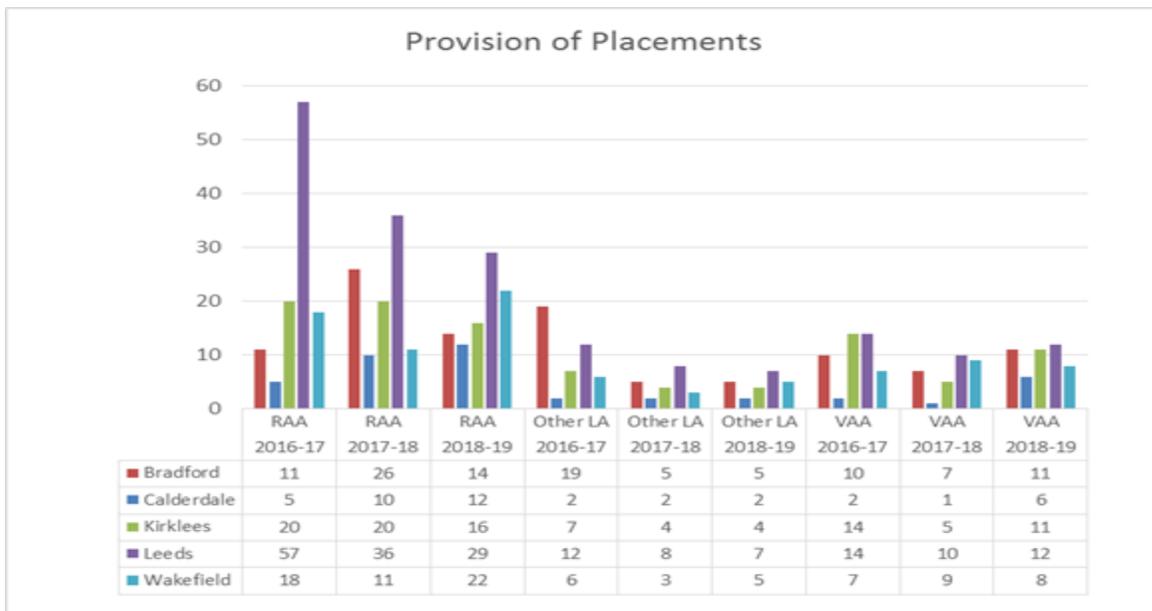
- 5 children were part of a sibling group (of the 30 matched);
- 5 children were placed who are part of a sibling group of which 1 of which was placed apart; as part of a plan due to their individual needs;
- 5 children were placed in early permanence placements during the year of which 2 have since been adopted. This is a very positive step in reducing the number of moves for children before they reach their permanent family.

### 3.3.9 Provision of Placements

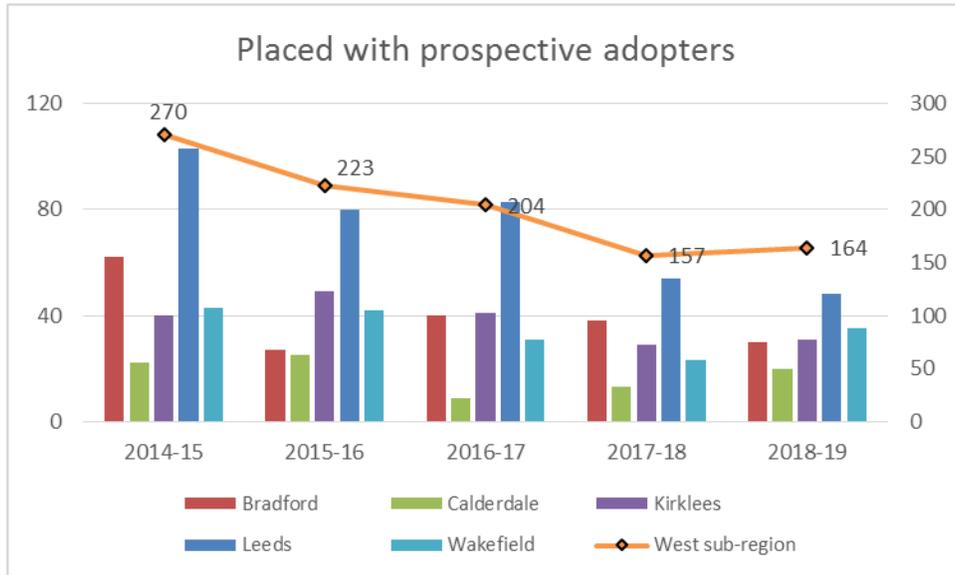
We placed 164 children this year in the region. The percentage of placements provided in-house within the region has decreased this year, due to the lack of families in the process when the RAA went live so not as many available in the system as we approached the second half of the year.

- 93 children within RAA;
- 23 children with other local authorities LA's);
- 48 children with VAA.

The percentage this year was 57% in house and 43% interagency. Last year it was 66% in house and 34% interagency. It is clear from this table that the trends for LA's in the use of interagency placements has changed with some LA's decreasing the number of interagency placements made, although some LA's have also seen a decreasing number of children coming through for adoption so the picture is more complex that the figures suggest.



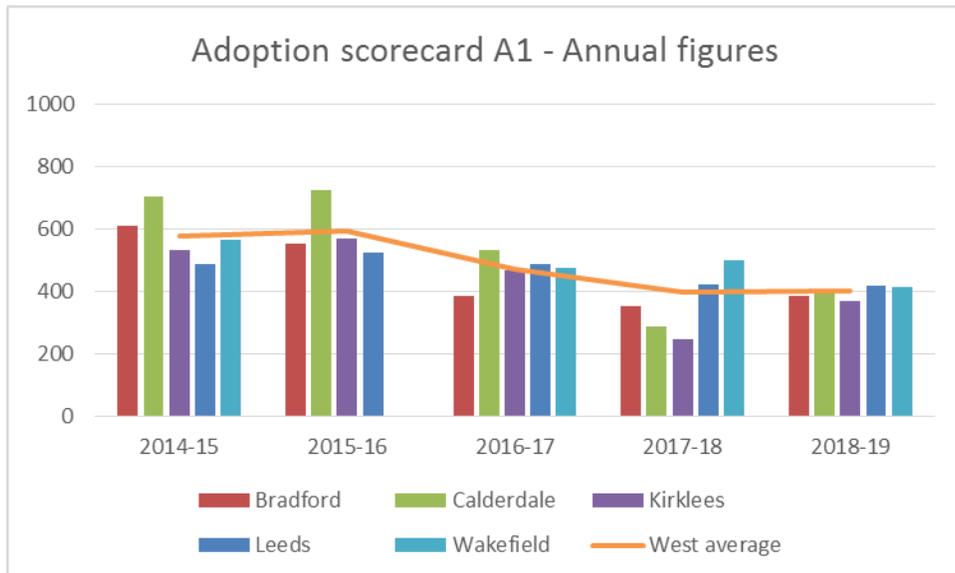
The following children were placed with adopters in the year. This is a slightly different figure from those matched as there is always a gap to allow time for preparation and introductions to the new family. For Bradford this is the same figure at 30 children matched and placed for adoption in the year.



We can see from the data above that children in the region, including those children who often wait longer due to their individual needs, age or ethnicity or being part of a sibling group are being found families to meet their needs. The data below looks at how timely these placements are being made.

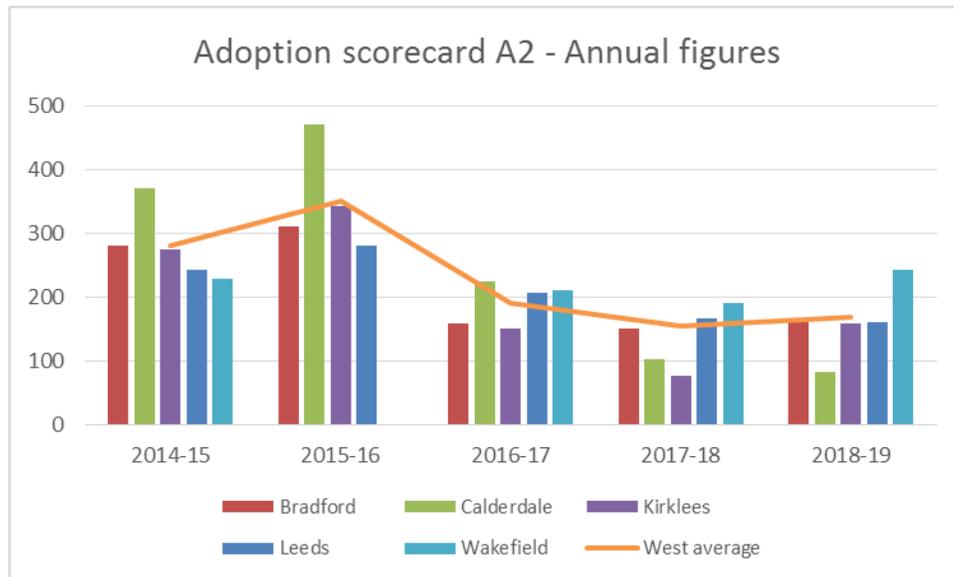
### 3.3.10 Adoption Scorecards

The average time between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family (indicator A1) for children in Bradford is 396 days, the National Indicator target is 426 days and the England Average is 486). This is positive and although slightly higher than last year remains below the national indicator.



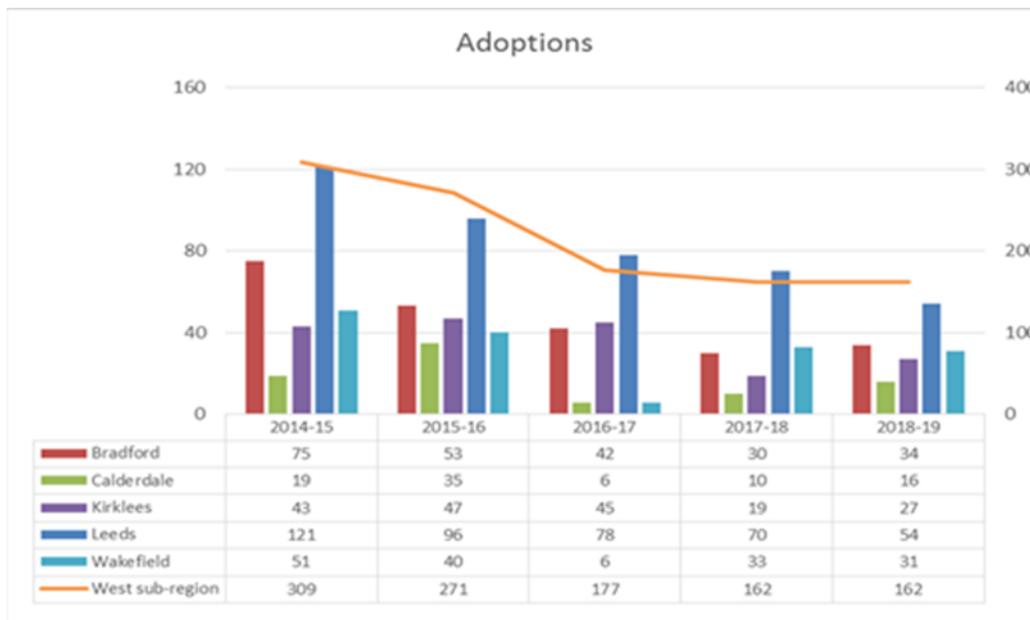
The average time between a local authority receiving court authority to place a child and the local authority deciding on a match to an adoptive family (Indicator A2) for children in Bradford is 171 days, and remains above the national indicator of 121 days, although Bradford is below the England average of 201. This reflects an issue of a national decline in the number of adopters available as well as some

LA's having less early permanence placements that can impact upon this overall figure.



### 3.3.11 Children adopted from care

The number of children who have been adopted has increased to 34, from 30 the previous year, with 10% of children leaving care being adopted. This is slightly below the national average.



## 3.4 Practice, quality of provision and management oversight

### 3.4.1 Awards

In October 2018 One Adoption West Yorkshire was awarded a national award for Excellence in adoption practice. This was the first time a regional adoption agency has won a national award and this has aided with raising the profile of the agency and recognising good practice. In addition to this one of our adoptive families in the region also won the Adopter Champion of the year. They adopted four children and assist in the training of early permanence adopters in our region, highlighting the benefits of this approach for children.

In March 2019 One Adoption West Yorkshire also won the 2018 Local Government Chronicles Award. This award was for working across public to public partnerships. The judges said of the entry: *“This partnership has taken an inclusive transformational approach to deliver a consistent high quality service. It has delivered a flagship service across a wide geographic area. It was the first of its kind and sets the standard for the rest of the country. It is shaped by the experience of its stakeholders.”*

#### 3.4.2 Recruitment and Assessment

Over 2018/19 the One Adoption brand awareness has continued to grow steadily. This can be seen by the increase in people finding the One Adoption website ‘organically’ (not through paid advertising). This activity resulted in 507 households attending the information events in West Yorkshire which is an increase of 129 compared to 2017/18. More targeted advertising has seen the marketing cost per household attending an information event reduced from £256 in 2017/18 to £115 this year.

The preparation of adopters has continued to improve with adopters now having access to additional training via full day or twilight sessions in relation to early permanence, birth parent workshop, infant brain development and training for relatives or friends.

The 4 days of Preparation Training now incorporate the use of Virtual Reality technology. This has had a very positive impact upon prospective adopters stating: *“a very good experience; really powerful and it really helped with putting yourself in the child’s shoes.”* There continues to be a commitment to ensure birth parents are actively involved in the preparation of adopters and the introduction of these workshops has really helped adoptive focus on the importance of working with birth parents to help adopted children develop a coherent sense of their identity. One adopter stated: *“I realised that you do not take a child and then forget about the birth family. They may not be there in person but they will always be part of the child’s life”.*

Over the last year there has been a real focus on promoting the Adoption Support Core Offer early in the recruitment process and ensuring this becomes the norm for adoptive families, enabling families to access support with a therapeutic parenting approach to meet their children’s needs.

#### 3.4.3 Adoption Panels

The adoption panels across the region continue to work well and the number of

independent panel chairs has increased from two to three with Andy Stott joining the team in September 2018. Communication between the Chairs and OAWY has improved with the Service Manager responsible for panels now making regular phone calls to the Chairs. Formal meetings are also undertaken between the Chairs and the agency. The adoption panels play an important role in providing feedback to the local authorities and the agency regarding practice and provide a half yearly report. This is discussed more in 3.4.16

#### 3.4.4 Family Finding

The Family Finding teams have continued with the regional linking meeting to look at children and families in the assessment process and to refine the systems to support this work. The ceasing of the National adoption register in March 2019 by the government has meant that other resources have been accessed to make links with families nationwide and we are exploring links to pilot the use of collective matching with Coram i and Linkmaker. We have continued to develop the partnership with the voluntary agency alliance in the region and we are exploring ways of commissioning their placements that ensure that children are placed more locally.

The use of profiling events has been positive with 5 profiling events held in 2018/19. These have resulted in 16 matches to date for children in the region. Approved and stage 2 adopters from OAWY and other agencies across the North of England were invited. The success of these events and the positive feedback from those who attended has resulted in plans for further profiling events to be held in 2019/20. Comments include: *“The event was excellent - the family finders and all the staff were amazing;”* *“all extremely informative – really good to have a social worker with me to think about the children that may be right for us.”*

Bump into meetings have developed and they happen following the decision to proceed with the adoptive placement and before adoption panel. Prior to the child being given information about their new family, the foster carer and adopters arrange to meet in a park or another location familiar to the child. When asking approved adopters what went well at the bump into meeting they said: *“It was great to see the twins for the first time but it was also great to meet their foster carer who was fab; “We could see boys playing care free, and see their personalities rather than just their pictures.”*

#### 3.4.5 Adoption Support

a) **Adoption support:** Do children and families have timely access to high quality support services?

The range and quality of adoption services open to all adopters across the region continues to develop and increase as gaps in provision have become clearer. The peer mentoring is going from strength to strength and there are now 31 trained mentors who are providing support to 51 families. The feedback from those who have a peer mentor has been really positive:

*“ Our mentor has been a life-line to us during this difficult process; “ helps me to feel I do a good job and that however challenging life is it's not insurmountable”; “It's so nice having someone who understands”.*

3 newsletters went out to all adoptive families across the region in June, October and January. These talk about all the activities going on across the region for families to access. Comments from adopters include *“thank you for a fantastic and varied newsletter. I really enjoyed reading it, especially the articles and also the resources information. I appreciate all of the help and support we receive which is so much more valuable than anything we received as new adopters in 2015. Everything has moved at such a pace and I like to keep up to date, thank you”*.

One of the stay and play groups has been relaunched following consultation with parents. There have been a number of training programmes and workshops for parents including foundations for attachment programme with more than 20 families having accessed this since the start of the year. Feedback includes: *“Very thought provoking, made complete sense, made me better understand what was happening for my child”*; *“Greater understanding and new ways of parenting”*. Training for parent regarding non violence resistance to help manage child to parent violence and a Safebase parenting programme for caring for teenagers has continued to be received positively.

The new Adoption Support Fund portal on the Government website came into force at the beginning of July 2018 and this is much more user-friendly and along with our improved business support processes we have had a higher number of successful applications for therapeutic support for families. In total we have accessed £2.1 million to support 650 adopted children in West Yorkshire.

#### 3.4.6 Disruptions

In the last year, 2 adoption placements have disrupted prior to the adoption order being made. Disruption is always a cause for concern and OAWY is working closely with the local authorities to ensure that a full understanding of the issues leading to the breakdowns are fully understood to inform future planning for the child and the adoptive parents as well as themes for learning for future practice.

#### 3.4.7 Quality Assurance

One Adoption West Yorkshire has developed a practice improvement framework and is committed to an improvement culture of learning. The principal sources of feedback are:

- Views of Children and Families: The views and experiences of children & young adults;
- Performance Data: Any statistical data that helps us judge the quality and effectiveness of our professional practice;
- Practice Wisdom & Knowledge: The practice wisdom of those staff who work with children, young people and families, adoption panels and learning from disruptions;
- The findings of external and internal inspections, audits and evaluations of our practice.

A Quality Assurance (QA) mechanism for panel work is used as a matter of course

and has found that the majority of prospective adopter reports (PARS) were of a good standard (81% 'good, 15% 'satisfactory' and 4% requiring improvement). This is an improvement on last years figure.

The Child Permanence Reports provided by Bradford local authority social workers have improved over the last year with just under half considered good although the number requiring improvement has increased. OAWY continues to offer individual and clinic support for social workers and further discussions are underway regarding training for social workers commissioned by the training unit.

LA	RATING	2017/18	2018/19
Bradford	Good	24%	46%
	Satisfactory	41%	11%
	Req Imprvmt	35%	43%

With regard to feedback from service users at adoption panel, 50 questionnaires were received from attendees at panel who rated the experience at panel out of a possible score of 10:

- 40 (80%) respondents rated the experience at 9 or higher;
- 6 (12%) respondents rated the experience at 8;
- 2 (4%) respondents rated the experience at 6;
- 1 (2%) respondent rated the experience at 3.

There has been some learning for panels and the agency about those circumstances at panel that have been difficult to ensure that we are fully aware of and can rectify issues as far as possible prior to panel.

There were 5 complaints made regarding the Adoption Service during the year. All complaints were resolved at stage one. 1 complaint was withdrawn, 1 was resolved, 1 was partially upheld, 1 was not upheld and 1 is ongoing, all relating to issues with adoption support. Each year we look at any themes arising from complaints to ensure that we can learn from these and feedback into practice improvement.

#### 3.4.8 Voice and Influence of Children, Young People and Adopters

Appendix 1 provides the Voice and Influence of Children, Young People and Adopters report card. This highlights examples of work undertaken to capture the views of service users to help develop and shape the service.

### 3.5. Continuous Professional and Service Development

#### 3.5.1 Staff development and support

All of the staff receive regular monthly supervision and have an appraisal. This is an opportunity for staff to ensure that there is reflection regarding their work and addresses their own personal and professional development and practice.

The analysis of the staff survey last summer showed feedback that the top positive theme was relationships. Staff had cited strength in relationships not only with each other but also LAs, adopters, other agencies and families.

The constructive themes that emerged for development were: communication – a sense of frustration that staff did not feel like they are informed of what was going on i.e. potential office moves and/ or that they have ‘no voice’; Travel/ location of offices – concerns over lost time, feeling of isolation and difficulty forming/ feeling like a team; Training – be it IT/ mosaic or social work practice training.

As a response to these issues a number of changes took place with regards to travel and accommodation, a review of communication across the agency with a new communication plan has been implemented and clinical supervision is provided for adoption support staff. We are underway with a skills gaps analysis in order to develop a workforce development strategy in the next year to ensure that we can continue to build a skilled workforce.

### 3.5.2 Training

During 2018/19 a range of training has been delivered across the teams. Here are some highlights:

- Restorative Practice- Action learning sets for managers
- Adoption Support Fund Assessment Tool – all social work staff;
- Adoption Support assessment framework – all social work staff
- Sibling assessments- family finders and LA social workers
- Contact and identity issues- social work staff
- Attachment Style Interview – all recruitment & assessment staff;
- Conflict Resolution – all team managers and advanced practitioners;
- Trauma Informed Training – delivered to all at a staff event in Oct;
- Virtual Reality – selected staff
- Management & leadership Level 3 & 5 apprenticeship – 3 x business support;

We are in the process of carrying out a skills gap analysis. This will inform the workforce development plan for the next two years to be in line with the service improvement plan. However, plans are already in place to provide training for adoption support workers with Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy & Non-Violent Resistance to work more effectively with families across the region.

### 3.5.3 Strategic issues and forward plans

OAWY’s plan on a page, Appendix 2, outlines the vision, mission, outcomes and priorities up to 2020/21. Activities linked to the delivery of the plan are tracked through the OAWY Service Improvement Plan.

## 4. **FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL**

- 4.1 The final outturn position for OAWY was an overall pressure of £858k, due to the pressures around the new payment arrangements (set up by the Consortium of

Voluntary Adoption Agencies (CVAA)) for Inter Agency placements and staffing capacity issues in the service around adoption support. Each local authority increased its contribution to meet this shortfall.

4.2 Within staffing there was a net position just under £13k under, due to the £225k DfE income stream for the Centre of Excellence Project.

4.3 Inter-Agency placements - changes that came into effect from 1st June 2018 are as follows: the fee rates increased for voluntary adoption agencies and the fees are required to be paid in full in the year of placement. This is a change to previous years where the fee would be spilt over two years (2/3rd's/1/3rd split). This double effect of increased fee and paying the voluntary agencies has significantly impacted on the financial position of OAWY which resulted of an overspend of £654k (£2,162k spend against budget of £1,508k).

4.4 Inter-Agency Income - a shortfall of £246k in 2018/19 due to less OAWY adopters available to be being matched with out of area children.

## **5. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES**

It is a regulatory requirement on the Local Authority that this report is prepared and presented to the Corporate Parenting Board of the Council. The report is linked to the corporate risk on Safeguarding Children.

## **6. LEGAL APPRAISAL**

There are no legal issues arising.

## **7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

### **7.1 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY**

OAWY completed an equality Impact assessment last year and a clear action plan emerged from this to ensure that we are able to provide a comprehensive service to all communities. The actions are captured in the service improvement plan. This assessment can be found at Appendix 3.

### **7.2 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

### **7.3 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS**

The reduction in travel for staff across the region supports the greenhouse gas emissions impact in reducing the carbon footprint associated with car travel. We have an all staff event in October and will discuss with the staff the best ideas that we can have to contribute to this strategy across the region.

### **7.4 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

There are no community safety implications in this report.

## **7.5 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT**

There are no issues relating to human rights

## **7.6 TRADE UNION**

There has been ongoing consultation with trade unions and staff over the last year regarding the move of staff within One Adoption from Wakefield to the Bradford Office.

## **7.7 WARD IMPLICATIONS**

There are no ward implications

## **7.8 AREA COMMITTEE ACTION PLAN IMPLICATIONS (for reports to Area Committees only)**

Not applicable

## **7.9 IMPLICATIONS FOR CORPORATE PARENTING**

Bradford local authority have a corporate parenting responsibility for children where there is plan to place a child for adoption and the annual report is presented to the board to ensure that elected members have oversight of the work of the local authority and the regional adoption agency .

## **7.10 ISSUES ARISING FROM PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESMENT**

There are no issues in this regard.

## **8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS**

None.

## **9. OPTIONS**

This report is for information and for the panel to note the report and continue to support the work the local authority and OAWY regarding adoptive families.

## **10. RECOMMENDATIONS**

That the Corporate Parenting Panel receives this report and continues to support the work of One Adoption West Yorkshire and the local authority to ensure our adopted children and families receive the best possible support.

## **11. APPENDICES**

- Appendix 1 Voice and Influence of Children and adopters
- Appendix 2 3 year plan on a page
- Appendix 3 Equality Impact Assessment
- Appendix 4 Performance Information

## **12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

None.

## APPENDIX 1

### Voice and Influence of Adopters, Children & Young People report Card April 2018 to March 2019

**Outcome:** Children and adoptive families to have an influence over decisions affecting their families' lives and the services we provide.

## Best ideas - what has worked?

### Virtual Reality

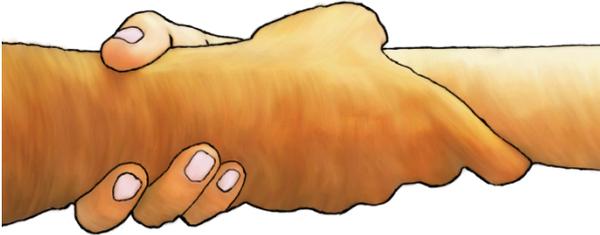
Working with Cornerstone, an agency run by adopters for adopters, we introduced Virtual reality (VR) to adopter preparation training in January 2019. The purpose of VR is to accelerate prospective adopters learning and understanding of the needs of children. The initial feedback to VR from prospective adopters has been positive with 15/17 rating it as good or excellent. Here are some comments:



- *...a very good experience;*
- *Really powerful;*
- *...it really helped with putting yourself in the child's shoes;*
- *Very impactful;*
- *...the content was very insightful;*
- *Emotional but again makes everything seem real*

This will be provided for all preparation training next year and we will also start to think about extending the use of the VR with adopters and professionals working with our families.

## Peer Mentoring Scheme



OAWY have delivered the Peer Mentoring Scheme, adopters having developed and delivering the service. The Peer Mentoring scheme provides trained volunteer mentors to help others through the process of adopting and being an adoptive parent – given how challenging and stressful it can be.

We now have 31 trained mentors who are providing support to 51 families. The feedback from those who have a peer mentor has been really positive:

- *Very informative mentor with great listening skills;*
- *Our mentor has been a life-line to us during this difficult process;*
- *At a time when we faced so many different challenges and concerns our mentor listened, shared their experiences and made us feel not so alone;*
- *Good to know someone who has adopted and I can ask for advice. Someone who will talk about "real life" rather than theory;*
- *Having somebody outside the process to talk to, who understands;*
- *Helps me to feel I do a good job and that however challenging life is it's not insurmountable;*
- *It so nice having someone who understands;*
- *It's nice to have someone to talk to or drop a quick message if a question pops into your head. I feel well supported;*
- *My mentor is always there for me we meet every month and I know she is only a phone call away if I need her.*

## Profiling Events

Adoptive parents wanted more opportunities to see children who were waiting adoption to make early links. The 5 profiling events held in 2018/19 have resulted in 16 matches so far. Approved and stage 2 adopters from OAWY and other agencies across the North of England were invited. The success of these events and the positive feedback from those who attended has resulted in plans for further profiling events to be held in 2019/20.

Feedback from those who attended has been positive, see comments below:

- *The event was excellent. The family finders and all the staff were amazing;*
- *All extremely informative – really good to have a social worker with me;*
- *It was a really good event and I enjoyed it;*
- *We don't feel you could do more.*

## Bump Into Meetings

Bump into meetings happen following the decision to proceed with the adoptive placement and before adoption panel. Prior to the child being given information about their new family, the foster carer and adopters arrange to meet in a park or another location familiar to the child. The adults say hello and spend some time engaging. Any organic interaction between the adopter and child is encouraged.

The meetings are short and planned with the support of the adoption Social Worker. It is hoped that when the child meets the prospective adopters and has a positive experience of being with these real people it will be easier for the child to associate these new people with positive feelings and experiences; in turn supporting the introduction period and placement.

When asking approved adopters what went well at the bump into meeting they said...

- *Relaxed atmosphere and calming influence of foster carer;*
- *It was great to see the twins for the first time but it was also great to meet their foster carer who was fab!*
- *We could see boys playing care free, and see their personalities rather than just their pictures;*
- *We were able to interact with the child and vice versa;*
- *We got to see him in the flesh, and start to hear from the foster carer about him.*



2 OAWY newsletters were sent to our adopters in 2018/19 (October and January). Please see the feedback we received from one of our adopters:

*...thank you for a fantastic and varied newsletter. I really enjoyed reading it, especially the articles and also the resources information. I appreciate all of the help and support we receive which is so much more valuable than anything we received as new adopters in 2005. Everything has moved at such a pace and I like to keep up to date...*

Adopter newsletters will be sent quarterly in 2019/20.

# adoptervoice

We provide a range of different opportunities and levels of involvement to enable adoptive parents to have a voice and influence in OAWY. Opportunities range from a paid role in the organisation to volunteering at events. We also pay an hourly rate for adoptive parents to deliver training. A new contract was put in place in January 2019 with Family Action to and Adoption UK are sub- contracted to deliver this service for the next three years, employing an adopter co-ordinator to continue to develop this work.

The Adopter coordinator is an adopter themselves and their role is to capture the voice of adopters and use them to influence the development of adoption services. They continue to help shape:

- information events – we now co deliver;
- assessment – peer mentoring has be introduced;
- prep training – co delivery and content influenced;
- support – development of a website, support menu.

An Adoption Charter has been produced by Adopter Voice. This outlines partnership working with One Adoption to ensure ‘the best possible future for families across the region’. The aims of this charter are integrated into the OAWY Service Improvement Plan to ensure a partnership approach to delivering service improvements.

Members of Adopter Voice have been involved in the recruitment of all managers, staff and panel chairs within OAWY.

## **OAWY Teen Groups**

OAWY have developed 3 new groups for children and young people across the region, in response to the need in the last year, including a new teen group in the Bradford area. The purpose of the group is for children with similar experiences to come together, share their experience and create a positive identity of themselves as adopted children. This has created a good support network for those who attend and gives them confidence outside of the group. There are currently 10 members who meet fortnightly and every third session they go out for an activity such as bowling, cinema or to eat. Here’s some feedback from one of the parents whose son attends:

- *XX is starting to look forward to teen group. He has said several times unprompted he trusts you and feels he can talk to you. You have worked wonders to help him settle into the group and it's helped that he is coming with XX. Now he feels more comfortable he can also see the benefits of having a different group peers to hang out with who aren't in school or at home. I am so glad he is going along to it. Thank you for everything you're doing there.*



## **Brain Based Parenting**

OAWY offer Brain Based Parenting training. This provides adopters with an opportunity to examine the impact of abuse and neglect on children's brain development and explore parenting strategies that best support repair and healthy brain development.

The content of the session covers:

- How brains develop pre-birth and in infancy;
- The stress response system (fight, flight, freeze);
- Facing the realities of children's experiences;
- Shame;
- Distressed behaviour;
- The principles of therapeutic parenting.

Here are some comments from the adopters who have attended:

- *The brain based parenting session last night was really great...;*
- *...it was really helpful to be reminded of how the brain is formed and from what age the various developments take place*
- *'...helpful to chat to other parents about our situations and realise we are all in this together...albeit alone!*

As a result of this positive feedback this training is now provided for prospective adopters during their preparation process to help them think about the need for a therapeutic parenting approach.

## **Adopters Early Permanence Placement (EPP) Training**

Adopters EPP training is an interactive 1 day event designed to enhance adopter's knowledge of EPP. The training is delivered by an experienced OAWY social worker and EPP adopter/ foster carer. 64 households have benefitted from the 7 sessions held during 2018/19.

Here is some of the positive feedback:

- *We had brief understanding of what EPP was going in however we have a clear understating now that we have done the session;*
- *Detailed and honest information;*
- *The training was straightforward and informative, giving a clear understanding of what the benefits and risks associated with EPP;*
- *Great training. Very honest and realistic;*
- *Trainers and adopter delivering training were organised, informative and sensitive to the feelings/questions/information being discussed;*
- *We were pretty sure we wanted to do EPP but the training confirmed we definitely do;*
- *Enhanced general understanding and introduced some specific ideas;*
- *Very balanced and well organised training.*



### **Birth parents workshop**

Adopted teenagers have talked about the importance of identity and lifelong relationships & birth families and adoptive families are key in helping children develop a coherent sense of identity, usually through contact arrangements and being open with children about their history.

Many adoptive families have misconceptions about birth parents and therefore we have introduced workshops in preparation training, delivered by birth parents talking about their experiences of contact. The introduction of this has been very powerful for adopters and has helped dispel myths about birth parents.

Here are some comments from adopters:

*“ I was not sure about this before I went to the session but I loved it. The birth parents there spoke to everyone so frankly about their experiences, thoughts and how they have coped with it. They spoke about letterbox contact and how much they depend on it.”*

*“ I realised that you do not take a child and then forget about the birth family. They may not be there in person but they will always be part of the child’s life”.*

*“ it made me think about the importance of keeping connections and I realised how vulnerable birth parents are”*

# Best ideas - what next?



In developing a more adopter led approach to finding families for children OAWY is holding its first Fun Day in June 2019. The Fun Day is a chance for OAWY and adopters from other agencies to meet some of the children who are waiting to be adopted and allows them to interact with the children in an enjoyable environment. The children attending will be those who typically wait longer to be adopted. There is careful preparation for these events with children, their foster carers and adopters.

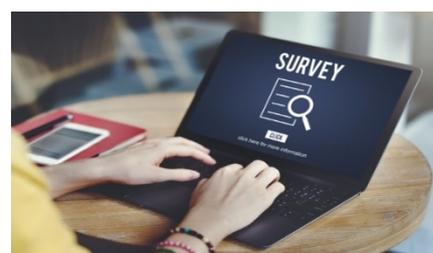
## Peer Mentoring Scheme

This year, 2019/20, the Peer Mentoring Scheme will be:

- Running workshops on particular subjects related to adoption e.g. life story work, education, introductions;
- Recruiting more volunteers to help with new community/social events in the west;
- Training up specialist mentors (qualification in mentoring) to help with specific issues.

## Adopter Survey

An on-line survey to all OAWY adopters will be sent out in May/ June 2019. The aim is to capture views on the services we provide so we can identify areas that may require improvement.



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# ONE ADOPTION WEST YORKSHIRE'S PLAN: 2018/19 - 2020/21



**Our Vision:** To be a flagship adoption agency that develops & promotes best practice, improving adoption standards nationally.

**Our Mission:** To find loving families who can meet the needs of children & offer an innovative & supportive approach to all those affected by adoption.

## What we'll do:

### 4 Outcomes:

1. Children move into their adoptive family without delay;
2. Families get help and support at every stage of the adoption journey;
3. Children have good quality care, a sense of belonging and stability within their adoptive family;
4. Children, adoptive and birth parents and adopted adults are listened to and have an influence in decisions that affect them and service development;

### 8 Priorities:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Recruit &amp; assess sufficient numbers of adopters to meet the needs of our children;</li> <li>2. Work with Local Authorities &amp; partners to:                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve early identification of children and further develop the use of EPP across the region;</li> <li>• Develop practice around identity (relationships with birth families &amp; life story work);</li> <li>• Develop knowledge and understanding about matching with adopters who are committed, flexible, open communicators and are willing to access support.</li> </ul> </li> <li>3. Develop our staff team &amp; panel members to ensure all our children &amp; families receive consistently excellent service &amp; support;</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Implement a consistent offer of adoption support across OAWY;</li> <li>5. Develop a Centre of Excellence for Adoption Support;</li> <li>6. Create new partnerships with organisations that will help us achieve our outcomes;</li> <li>7. Establish &amp; promote a peer mentoring scheme;</li> <li>8. Continue to work with Adopter Voice, AT-ID &amp; birth families;</li> </ol> |
|---|--|

### 3 Obsessions:

1. Increase the number of adopters recruited
2. Timely placement of children with families
3. Quality of support provided

## How we'll do it:



## 3 behaviours that underpin everything:

1. Listening & responding to the voice of the child;
2. Restorative Practice: doing with not for or to;
3. Outcomes based accountability is anyone any better off?

## How we'll know if we've made a difference:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| Increased the numbers of adopters recruited & approved                 | Positive service user feedback  |
| Reduced timescale in which children are placed with adoptive parent(s) | Evaluation from Adoption Support Fund;  |
| High level of family stability maintained                              | A range of established service user groups that feed directly into our business planning. |

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# APPENDIX 3 Equality, Diversity,



As a public authority we need to ensure that all our strategies, policies, service and functions, both current and proposed have given proper consideration to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration. In all appropriate instances we will need to carry out an equality, diversity, cohesion and integration impact assessment.

This form:

- can be used to prompt discussion when carrying out your impact assessment
- should be completed either during the assessment process or following completion of the assessment
- should include a brief explanation where a section is not applicable

<b>Directorate:</b> Children & Families	<b>Service area:</b> One Adoption West Yorkshire
<b>Lead person:</b> Sarah Johal	<b>Contact number:</b> 07891277316
<b>Date of the equality, diversity, cohesion and integration impact assessment:</b> February 2018	

**1. Title:** One Adoption West Yorkshire

Is this a:

**Strategy /Policy**       **Service / Function**       **Other**

**If other, please specify**

**2. Members of the assessment team:**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Role on assessment team e.g. service user, manager of service, specialist</b>
Sarah Johal	One Adoption West Yorkshire	Head of One Adoption West Yorkshire
Mary Brudenell	One Adoption West Yorkshire	Service Delivery Manager, One Adoption West Yorkshire
Julie Chew	One Adoption West Yorkshire	Service Delivery Manager, One Adoption West Yorkshire
Mandy Prout	One Adoption West Yorkshire	Service Delivery Manager, One Adoption West Yorkshire
Aretha Hanson	One Adoption West Yorkshire	Business Support Manager, One Adoption West Yorkshire
Richard Stevenson	One Adoption West Yorkshire	Practice Improvement & Development Manager, One Adoption West Yorkshire

**3. Summary of strategy, policy, service or function that was assessed:**

In 'Regionalising adoption' in June 2015 the Government set out its commitment to

markedly improve outcomes for children through the delivery of a regional adoption system where:

- children are matched with the most suitable adopter as quickly as possible;
- recruitment takes place at an efficient scale to provide a pool of 'adoption ready' adopters large enough and well enough matched to the needs of children waiting and;
- enough high quality adoption support services are available nationwide.

One Adoption West Yorkshire (OAWY) was the first Regional Adoption Agency to go-live on the 1<sup>st</sup> of April 2017. OAWY is made up of the 5 separate Local Authority adoption agencies which provided adoption services for West Yorkshire; Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees, Leeds and Wakefield and is the largest adoption agency in the North of England.

This new agency is designed to offer an innovative and adopter friendly approach to adoption recruitment, adoption support, and family finding for children and prospective adopters as well as high quality training.

By working together we will provide even higher levels of expertise and support to our adoptive families at all stages of the adoption process and with the inspiration and direction provided by our adoptive parents we will ensure that we provide the kind of support that families want and need.

We want every child to have a family to grow up in and we need more adoptive parents to play a vital role in fulfilling this vision. Adoption is an exciting and challenging experience for everyone involved. We are seeking adoptive parents from all walks of life to reflect the range of children we have who are looking for a secure home with patience, understanding and loving kindness.

This Assessment looks at how OAWY considers Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration throughout the adoption process. It will also highlight areas that need to be improved and the actions that will be taken to address them.

**4. Scope of the equality, diversity, cohesion and integration impact assessment**  
(complete - 4a. if you are assessing a strategy, policy or plan and 4b. if you are assessing a service, function or event)

**4a. Strategy, policy or plan**

(please tick the appropriate box below)

The vision and themes, objectives or outcomes	<input type="checkbox"/>
The vision and themes, objectives or outcomes and the supporting guidance	<input type="checkbox"/>
A specific section within the strategy, policy or plan	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Please provide detail:**

<b>4b. Service, function, event</b> please tick the appropriate box below	
The whole service (including service provision and employment)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
A specific part of the service (including service provision or employment or a specific section of the service)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Procuring of a service (by contract or grant)	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><b>Please provide detail:</b> This assessment will cover the three core elements of service delivery; Recruitment and Assessment, Family Finding and Adoption Support and the services users; the child/ adopted person, people wishing to adopt, adopters, birth parent and staff.</p>	

<p><b>5. Fact finding – what do we already know</b> Make a note here of all information you will be using to carry out this assessment. This could include: previous consultation, involvement, research, results from perception surveys, equality monitoring and customer/ staff feedback.</p> <p>(priority should be given to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration related information)</p> <p>There are no restrictions to adoptive applicants regardless of age, religion/ belief/ faith, disability, gender, sexual orientation, race or if they are a trans person, provided they are deemed to be able to meet the needs of the child/ children they wish to adopt.</p> <p>Children who wait longer to be adopted generally have one of more of the following characteristics; they are older, BME, have a disability or are part of a sibling group.</p>		
	<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<b>Age</b>	Age restrictions for adopting applicants are flexible and OAWY recognise that more people are having children at an older age.	There is a shortage of adopters for older children. The lack of placements could have a negative impact on this group as these children may be placed out of their local area which in turn may impact on their continued contact with their family and local support structures. Specific targeting of older adopters has not been carried out to date.
<b>Religion/ Belief / Faith</b>	OAWY accepts adoption applications from applicants of all religions/ beliefs/ faiths. This ensures there is potential for a	There are not always adequate numbers of potential adopters or children to meet the religious/ belief/ faith needs of either party.

	wide range of potential adopters recruited to meet the range of children needing placement.	Adopters from faith backgrounds often adopt for altruistic reasons and tend to consider taking older children and sibling groups. There is not enough adopters for this group of children so a more targeted approach is required.
<b>Disability</b>	Adopters with a disability are able to adopt. The services of the medical advisor are used to ensure decision making is always done to prevent discrimination, whilst ensuring the needs of the child are paramount.	<p>Some potential adoptive applicants who have a disability may view this as negatively impacting upon their right to adopt. For example, the issue of mental health or a life limiting health issue/disability can be a limiting factor when deciding someone is suitable to adopt a child. However the needs of the children to have stability and care throughout their childhood must remain the primary focus and therefore some applicants may feel they have been discriminated against.</p> <p>Some children, because of their complex needs, often wait longer for permanent placements. There is a need for more Adopters to offer a permanent home for disabled children. In particular children with Asperger's or those on the Autistic spectrum are particularly hard to place and consideration needs to be given to recruiting and supporting adopters who have the skills to look after these children.</p>
<b>Gender</b>	Female and male adopters are able to adopt.	<p>Single males and single female adopters at times are not aware they can adopt on their own and applicants from single males are small.</p> <p>Although there are no gender considerations in recruiting Adopters and the service operates according to our own anti-discriminatory practice the main carer within the household within adoption is usually female. A negative impact of this may be that there is a potential for male adopters to become isolated and in these instances they should be encouraged to attend support groups (see Action Plan).</p>
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	OAWY recruitment procedures are anti-discriminatory and welcome applicants who are LGBT. The assessment process conforms to British Association for Adoption and Fostering (BAAF) guidance on assessment and workers have been trained in assessment,	We are not aware of any barriers to LGBT groups being recruited to adoption. However, refresher training would be useful to staff in matters of recruitment and assessment of LGBT applicants.

	including assessing gay and lesbian adopters.	
<b>Race</b>	Adopting applicants from any racial background are recruited to OAWY, if they meet all the relevant criteria and are able to meet the needs of the children.	Recruiting adopters for children from BME backgrounds particularly children with mixed heritage remains a challenge. Resources are available to purchase appropriate adoptive placements for children and we have a growing number of out of authority placements that reflect this.
<b>Trans People</b>	OAWY policies do not discriminate against trans-gender adopters.	Of all the diversity strands OAWY has the least knowledge and experience in working with Trans People. Staff training and development needs to be undertaken to ensure Trans People who wish to adopt have fair access to the process and feel confident to adopt.

**Are there any gaps in equality and diversity information  
Please provide detail:**

N/A.

**Action required:**  
 Action 1 - Develop an innovative & bespoke family finding/ matching process for children who wait longer.  
 Action 2 - Ensure marketing campaigns are inclusive of older adopters.  
 Action 3 - Specific marketing campaign target at adopters from faith backgrounds.  
 Action 4 - Implement a service user feedback mechanism that allows analysis by diversity strand. This will enable OAWY to identify areas where action is required.  
 Action 5 – Provide refresher LGBT Training.

**6. Wider involvement – have you involved groups of people who are most likely to be affected or interested**

**Yes**                       **No**

**Please provide detail:**

In order to gather a perspective of the main service users the following groups who represent adopted teenagers, adoptive parents and birth parents were consulted.

- Adopters via Adopter Voice.

**Action required:**  
 Action 6 - Maintain active contact with service user groups and work with them to identify and implement service improvements.

**7. Who may be affected by this activity?**  
 please tick all relevant and significant equality characteristics, stakeholders and barriers that apply to your strategy, policy, service or function

**Equality characteristics**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Age</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Carers</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Disability</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Gender reassignment</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Race</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Religion or Belief</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Sex (male or female)</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Sexual orientation</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Other</b>		

(**Other** can include – marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, and those areas that impact on or relate to equality: tackling poverty and improving health and well-being)  
**Please specify:** n/a

**Stakeholders**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Services users</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Employees</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Trade Unions</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Partners</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Members</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Suppliers</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Other please specify</b>		

**Potential barriers.**

<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Built environment</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Location of premises and services</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Information and communication</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Customer care</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Timing</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Stereotypes and assumptions</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Cost</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Consultation and involvement</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Financial exclusion</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Employment and training</b>



**specific barriers to the strategy, policy, services or function**

**Please specify**

The above are noted as potential barriers but are not known to be. Action 4, section 12 will seek to evidence if there are any such barriers which OAWY will then plan to address.

**8. Positive and negative impact**

Think about what you are assessing (scope), the fact finding information, the potential positive and negative impact on equality characteristics, stakeholders and the effect of the barriers

**8a. Positive impact:**

Recruitment & Assessment of Adopters

1. The OAWY website signposts potential adopters to Information Events which are held across the region, so there are always local events. Generally the events are held at venues that ensure they are physically accessible for people who wish to attend who have a disability;
2. OAWY has a clear statement in its' policy that we accept and actively recruit adopters regardless of age, religion/ belief/ faith, disability, gender, sexual orientation, race or if they are a Trans Person provided they are deemed to be able to meet the needs of the child/ children they wish to adopt;
3. The service focuses on effective partnership working to continue the improvement of services to children affected by adoption irrespective of age, religion/ belief/ faith, disability, gender, sexual orientation, race or if they are a Trans Person. Our marketing and publicity material uses positive images to promote our approach to equality within our advertising, see Appendix A;
4. OAWY have approved a diverse range of people, including same gender couples and single people. We have undertaken specific LGBT recruitment for adoption families and have been actively involved in the LGBT Challenge group;
5. We have a planned process of continual training for adoption Social Workers around LGBT;
6. Constructive use of targeted recruitment activity has increased our ability to secure placements for children with specific needs arising from cultural background or developmental issues and disability;
7. Information events and preparation events are held at venues to meet the needs of adopters with a disability;

Family Finding for Children

8. Profiling Events are held in accessible buildings quarterly which are aimed at adopters in assessment as well as approved. This enables people to get information early about the reality of the children OAWY are seeking to place;
9. OAWY has a robust approach to ensuring that children's religious and cultural needs are met through effective matching meetings identifying need and support plans;
10. OAWY seeks to identify and meet any additional support needs Adopters may have in order to care for children from different ethnic, cultural and religious groups and children with disabilities;
11. OAWY uses Adoption Match and Link Maker to identify placements for those

children who wait longer. This includes regularly attending national exchange days and activity days – allowing OAWY to identify adopters who can meet the specific needs of the child;

#### Adoption Support

12. OAWY provides generic support services to all affected by adoption (birth relations, adopters and adoptees);
13. Adoption Support Assessments are based upon the needs of the person/ people;
14. Initial advice and information is free and the majority of services are free to access;
15. Adoption Support is provided at a range of accessible locations;

#### Adopter Voice

16. Adopter Voice are an adopter led group that work with OAWY to ‘challenge, support and input into the development of adoption services at local, regional and national levels so that they are adopter led’. Adopter Voice is available to all adopters and encourages adopters to become involved and/ or access support on-line;
17. All 15 Yorkshire LAs sent a survey to all registered adopters inviting them to join Adopter Voice;
18. Adopter Voice provides an arena for all adopters to access information and advice;

#### Birth Parent Groups

19. OAWY work with PAC-UK (the country’s largest independent Adoption Support Agency) to learn from feedback from birth parents;  
<http://www.pac-uk.org/>

#### AT-ID

20. OAWY work with AT-ID (adopted teens identity) to learn from feedback from adopted teenagers;  
<http://www.at-id.org.uk/>

#### Staffing

21. Diversity issues are addressed during supervision to ensure that the needs of children are met and that service users are being treated fairly;
22. We are members of New Family social, a LGBT group who offer specific support to the LGBT community of adopters. There are support groups across the region for single adopters;

#### Training

23. Social workers are trained regarding equality and diversity issues in their degree in social work. All the managers have had recent training regarding unconscious bias within OAWY;

#### Specialist Advice

24. We commission a service for Inter Country Adoption from the Yorkshire adoption agency. All inter country adopters attend specialist training specific to adopting from overseas provided by this agency.

#### **Action required:**

None.

**8b. Negative impact:**

Recruitment and Assessment of Adopters

- 1. There are insufficient adopters with a diverse background coming forward to adopt;
- 2. OAWY have a high level of interest from the south Asian communities to adopt full Asian babies rather than older children of mixed ethnicity;

Family Finding for Children

- 3. There can be unconscious bias from Children’s Social Workers regarding considering single females and males for the children they have waiting;
- 4. Children cannot always be matched with families that meet their own cultural heritage and social workers are not always willing to consider families with a different heritage from the child’s;

Adoption Support

- 5. We do not know if there are any groups of people who struggle to obtain the adoption support we offer;

Training

- 6. Of all the diversity stands Trans People is the area we have the least knowledge of, training is needed in this area.

**Action Required**

Action 7 - Link with BME communities to promote and educate in terms of the children we have available for adoption (work with Leeds City Council’s Communities Teams for advice and support).

Action 8 - Continue to challenge unconscious bias from children’s social workers in a restorative way and provide training and support as required.

Action 9 - Conduct Analytical work to establish if OAWY can better target adopters that meet the cultural needs of our children.

Action 10 - Work needs to be conducted to identify groups that may benefit from more specific adoption support i.e. Dad’s group, same sex parents as there may be gaps in the support we offer.

Action 11 – Training delivered to enhance organisational understanding of Trans People and to harness their ability to become adoptive parents.

**9. Will this activity promote strong and positive relationships between the groups/communities identified?**

**Yes**

**No**

**Please provide detail:**

OAWY will always try to build and maintain positive and open relationships for people aiming to or being involved in the adoption process.

**Action required:**

See actions 1 – 11, section 12.

**10. Does this activity bring groups/communities into increased contact with each other?** (e.g. in schools, neighbourhood, workplace)

**Yes**

**No**

**Please provide detail:**

**Action required:**

None.

**11. Could this activity be perceived as benefiting one group at the expense of another?** (e.g. where your activity/decision is aimed at adults could it have an impact on children and young people)

**Yes**

**No**

**Please provide detail:**

There could be the perception that certain groups are less likely to adopt than others. The primary focus of OAWY will always be the child. The decision to place a child will be based upon the individual(s) ability to meet the child's ongoing needs and not their individual(s) diverse group. Therefore, prospective adopters who are not matched with a child may feel they are at a disadvantage.

**Action required:**

See Action 3, section 12.

## 12. Equality, diversity, cohesion and integration action plan

(insert all your actions from your assessment here, set timescales, measures and identify a lead person for each action)

Action	Timescale	Measure	Lead person
Action 1: Develop an innovative & bespoke family finding/ matching process for children who wait longer.	31/03/2019	A new approach to reduce waiting time for children who wait longer piloted.	Mary Brudenell
Action 2: Ensure marketing campaigns are inclusive of older adopters.	31/03/2019	Campaign delivered.	Mandy Prout/ Dave Glanville
Action 3: Specific marketing campaign target at adopters from faith backgrounds.	31/03/2019	Campaign delivered.	Mandy Prout/ Dave Glanville
Action 4: Implement a service user feedback mechanism that allows analysis by diversity strand.	31/12/2018	Service user satisfaction results reportable by diversity strand. This will enable planned action to be taken to make improvements as required.	Richard Stevenson/ Aretha Hanson
Action 5: Provide refresher LGBT Training.	31/12/2018		Mandy Prout/ Mary Brudenell/ Julie Chew
Action 6: Maintain active contact with service user groups and work with them to identify and implement service improvements.	31/06/2018	Service user groups improvement actions added to OAWY service improvement plans.	Richard Stevenson
Action 7: Link with BME communities to promote and educate in terms of the children we have available for adoption (work with Leeds City Council's Communities Teams for advice and support).	31/03/2019	Outcomes based accountability workshop held with community leaders across the West Yorkshire Region.	Sarah Johal/ Mandy Prout/ Mary Brudenell
Action 8: Continue to challenge unconscious bias from children's social workers in a restorative way and provide training and support as required.	31/03/2019	Set-up training/ support group and deliver bespoke training session(s) as required to children's social workers.	Mandy Prout/ Mary Brudenell/ Julie Chew




**13. Governance, ownership and approval**

State here who has approved the actions and outcomes from the equality, diversity, cohesion and integration impact assessment

Name	Job Title	Date
Sarah Johal	Head of OAWY	
<b>Date impact assessment completed</b>		

**14. Monitoring progress for equality, diversity, cohesion and integration actions** (please tick)

- As part of Service Planning performance monitoring
- As part of Project monitoring
- Update report will be agreed and provided to the appropriate board  
Please specify which board
- Other (please specify)

**15. Publishing**

Though **all** key decisions are required to give due regard to equality the council **only** publishes those related to **Executive Board, Full Council, Key Delegated Decisions** or a **Significant Operational Decision**.

A copy of this equality impact assessment should be attached as an appendix to the decision making report:

- Governance Services will publish those relating to Executive Board and Full Council.
- The appropriate directorate will publish those relating to Delegated Decisions and Significant Operational Decisions.
- A copy of all other equality impact assessments that are not to be published should be sent to [equalityteam@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:equalityteam@leeds.gov.uk) for record.

Complete the appropriate section below with the date the report and attached assessment was sent:

For Executive Board or Full Council – sent to <b>Governance Services</b>	Date sent:
For Delegated Decisions or Significant Operational Decisions – sent to appropriate <b>Directorate</b>	Date sent:
All other decisions – sent to <a href="mailto:equalityteam@leeds.gov.uk">equalityteam@leeds.gov.uk</a>	Date sent:

**You learn a lot when  
you adopt, Liam and  
Nick learned it really  
is good to talk.**



**One**  
Adoption

YOUR REGIONAL ADOPTION AGENCY

**Hear more about their adoption story at  
[www.oneadoption.co.uk/liam](http://www.oneadoption.co.uk/liam)**



**You learn a lot when  
you adopt, Alice and  
Ben learned that  
honesty really is the  
best policy.**



**One**  
Adoption

YOUR REGIONAL ADOPTION AGENCY

**Hear more about their adoption story at  
[www.oneadoption.co.uk/alice](http://www.oneadoption.co.uk/alice)**



**You learn a lot  
when you adopt,  
Nicola learned that  
two can be family.**



**One**  
Adoption

YOUR REGIONAL ADOPTION AGENCY

**Hear more about her adoption story at  
[www.oneadoption.co.uk/nicola](http://www.oneadoption.co.uk/nicola)**





## **For Megan and Angie, starting a family was a little more complicated than for some couples**

We thought about all the alternatives - and explored some a little more than others - and although in the beginning I was keener than Angie to consider adoption that was the path we decided to follow.

[Read Megan and Angie's story](#)



## **Matt and James wanted to adopt a very young child so Early Permanence Placement (EPP) seemed like the natural choice**

'We started talking about adoption with friends, family and work colleagues, and it became clear that many people had some knowledge of, or had their lives touched by adoption,' says James. 'So, armed with encouragement and reassurance, we began researching online to learn more about opportunities for adoption and the processes involved.'

[Read Matt and James' story](#)

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## **'You learn a lot when you adopt. Jane and Simon learned how many toys fill a house'**

Jane and Simon made the decision to adopt, rather than pursue fertility treatment, after trying for a baby for over five years. They felt that they could provide a loving, stable family home for a child that needed one.

[Read Jane and Simon's story](#)



## **'You learn a lot when you adopt. Alice and Ben learned that honesty really is the best policy'**

Alice and Ben adopted James and his disabled brother Luke, when they were four and three years old respectively, and their four birth children were in their teens.

[Read Alice and Ben's story](#)

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# Children's services Analysis Tool (ChAT)

Based on Ofsted's ILACS Annex A dataset (2018)

## Bradford

31 March 2019

Children adopted, waiting to be adopted, or had an adoption decision reversed in the last 12 months

from 01/04/2018 to 31/03/2019

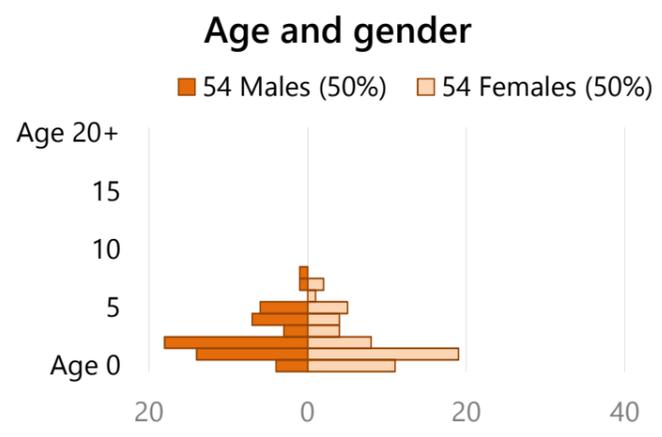
# 108 children

- 34 Child/ren adopted last 12 months
- 65 Child/ren waiting to be adopted
- (62 Child/ren waiting with placement order)
- 9 Child/ren with decision reversed

## Ethnic background

White	70%
Mixed	20%
Asian or Asian British	3%
Black or black British	0%
Other ethnic group	1%
Not stated	6%
Not recorded	0%

See page 20 for comparisons

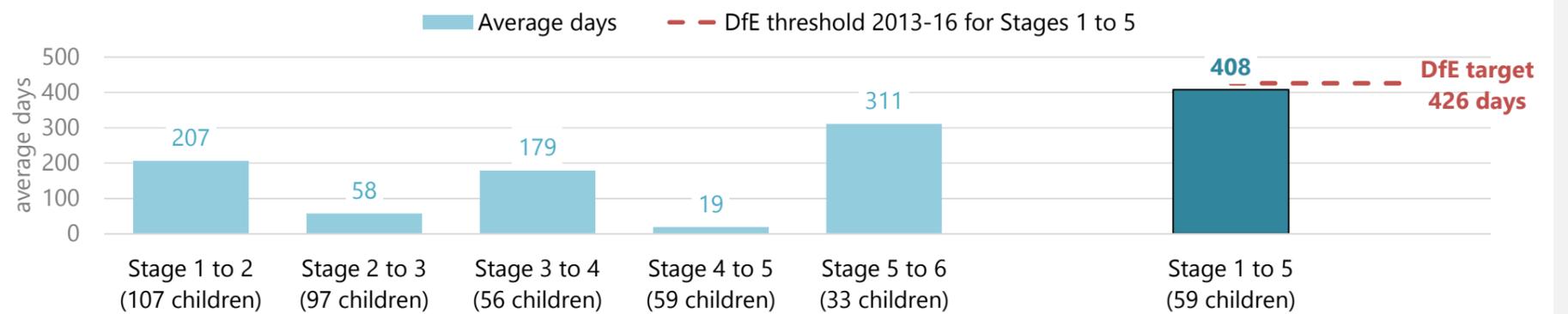


3 children (3%) with a disability

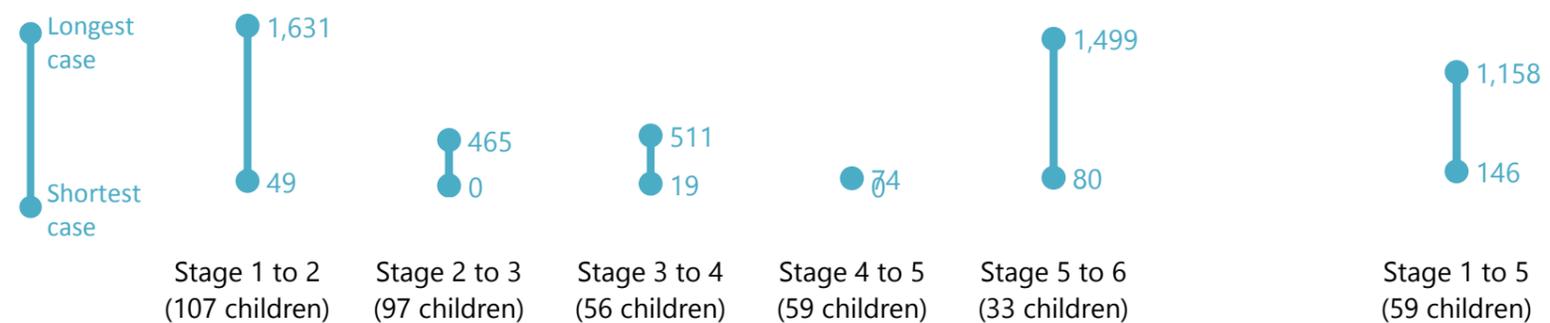
## Timeliness of each stage of the adoption process

- Stage 1** Child entered care
- Stage 2** Decision that child should be placed for adoption
- Stage 3** Placement order granted
- Stage 4** Matching child and prospective adopters
- Stage 5** Placed for adoption
- Stage 6** Adoption order granted

Average duration of each stage (number of days)



Range in days between shortest and longest cases at each stage

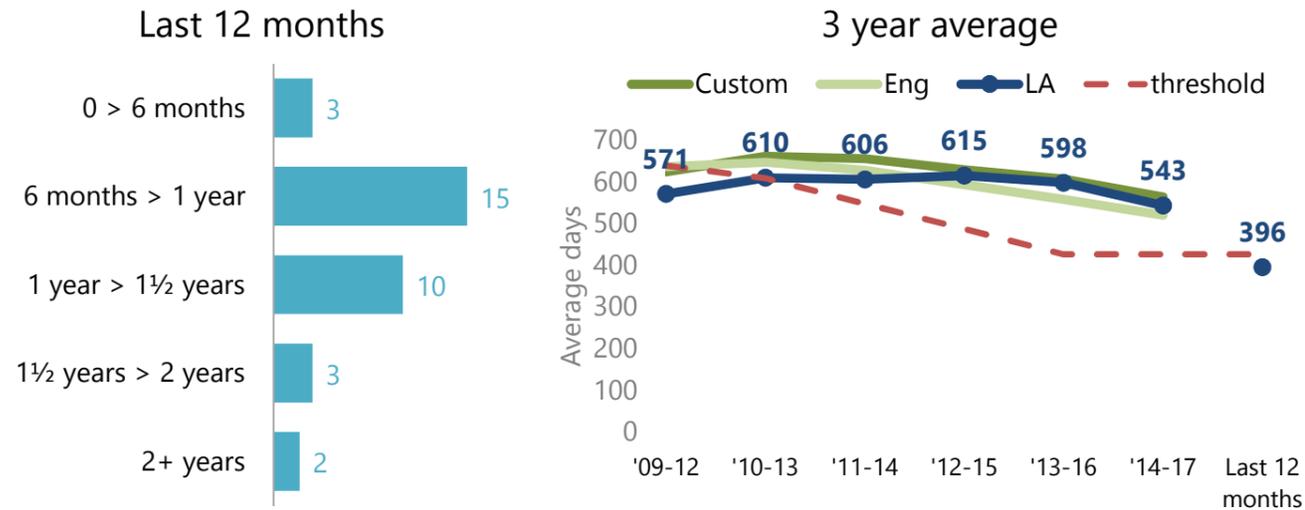


Adoption benchmarking

from 01/04/2018  
to 31/03/2019

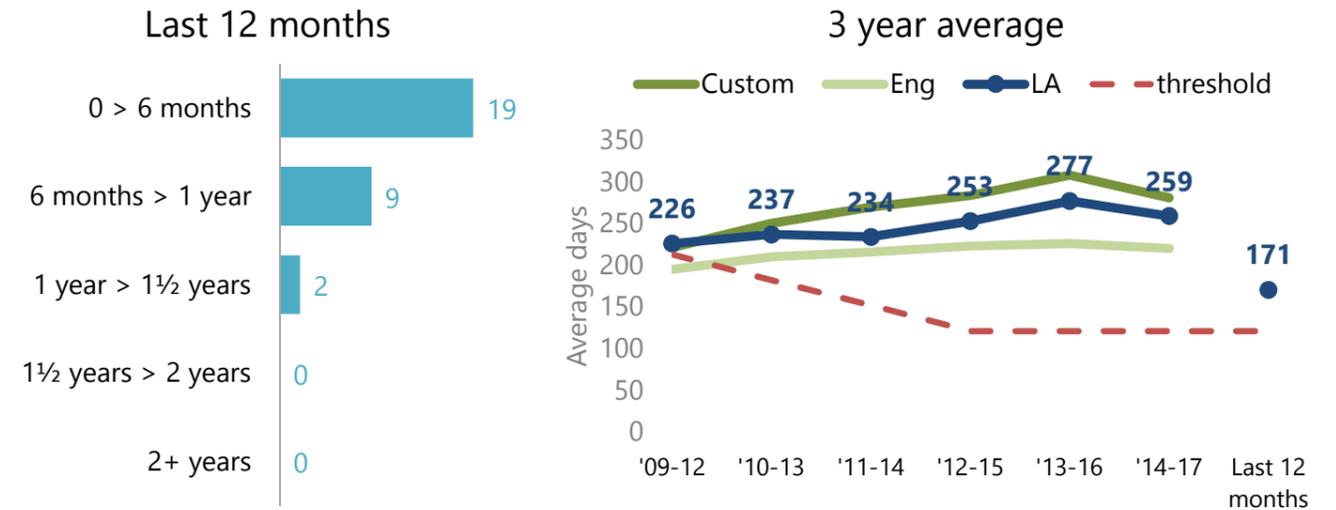
(A1) Time between entering care and placed with family for adopted children

**396 days** The average number of days from the date the child entered care to the date the child moved in with their adoptive family for adopted children  
34 children



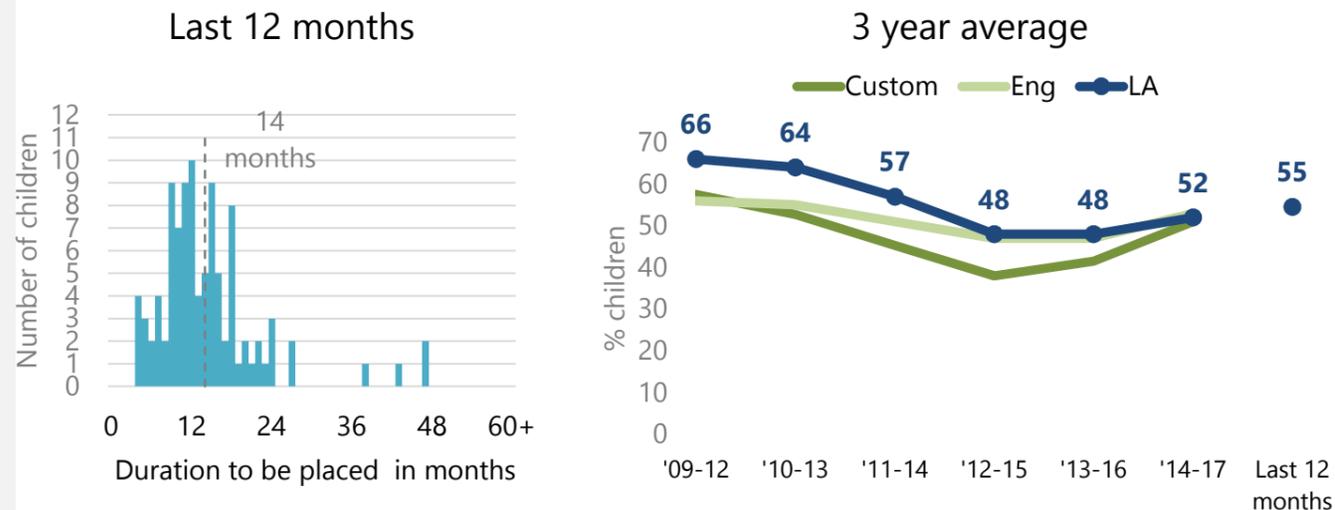
(A2) Time between placement order and deciding on a match

**171 days** The average number of days from the date of the placement order to the date the child was matched to prospective adopters  
30 children



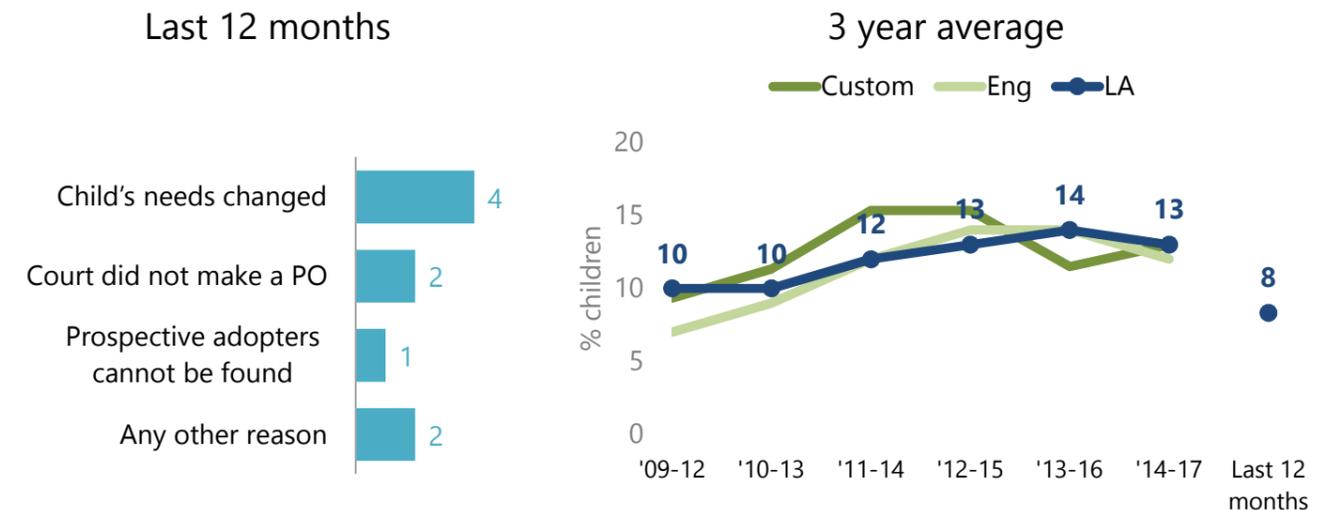
(A3) Time between entering care and placed for adoption

**55%** Children placed who waited less than the threshold between entering care and being placed for adoption (threshold: 14 months for 2013-16)  
54/99 children



(A5) Permanence decision changed away from adoption

**8%** Children where there was a decision that the child should no longer be placed for adoption  
9/108 children



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<b>Conservative</b>	<b>Labour</b>	<b>Lib Dem</b>
Cllr Dale Smith	Cllr Carol Thirkill (Chair)	Cllr Julie Humphreys
	Cllr Adrian Farley (Dep Chair)	
	Cllr Angela Tait	
<b>Alternates</b>	<b>Alternates</b>	<b>Alternates</b>
Cllr Mike Pollard	Cllr Sarfraz Nazir	Cllr Nicola Pollard
	Cllr Nussrat Mohammed	
	Cllr Mohammed Shafiq	

<b>Non-voting Co-opted Members</b>	
Inspector Kevin Taylor	West Yorkshire Police, Partnerships
Yasmin Umarji	Senior Primary Partnership Manager, Education
Sue Thompson	Designated Nurse – Safeguarding Children and LAC, CCG Collaboration
The Chair of the Children in Care Council	

**CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL**

<b>Date and Venue</b>	<b>Type of Meeting / Venue</b>	<b>Agenda Items</b>	<b>Lead Officer / Report Author</b>	<b>Deadline for report to J Cryer</b>	<b>Chair's briefing</b>	<b>Report deadline to Secretariat</b>	<b>Publication of Papers</b>
<b>22<sup>nd</sup> July 2019</b>	<b>Business Meeting Committee Room 1 City Hall</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appointment of Co opted Members</li> </ul>	Chair				
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regional Adoption Agency: Annual report for Bradford focusing on the achievements and the challenges.</li> </ul>	Sarah Johal OAWY	2/7/19	5/7/19 3.30pm	9/7/19	12/7/19
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children Placed out of Bradford: Report on the numbers of children; services offered; challenges and sufficiency plans</li> </ul>	David Byrom	2/7/19	5/7/19 3.30pm	9/7/19	12/7/19
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Citizenship and Passports update with a focus on Brexit planning</li> </ul>	Rachel Curtis	2/7/19	5/7/19 3.30pm	9/7/19	12/7/19
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Forward Plan</li> </ul>	Chair				
<b>9<sup>th</sup> September 2019</b>	<b>Joint meeting with young people / Culture Fusion or Committee Room 3 (TBC)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Young people's feedback from the development event</li> </ul>	Mick Nolan/ Young People	20/8/19	23/8/19 1pm	27/8/19	30/8/19

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leisure Services Corporate Parenting report</li> </ul>	Phil Barker	20/8/19	23/8/19 1pm	27/8/19	30/8/19
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Forward Plan</li> </ul>	Chair				
<b>4<sup>th</sup> November 2019</b>	<b>Business meeting / Committee Room 1, City Hall</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Head of QA and Safeguarding annual report to include IRO/CP/Audit</li> </ul>	Amandip Johal	15/10/19	17/10/19 11am	22/10/19	25/10/19
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Corporate Services : Corporate Parenting Report</li> </ul>	Joanne Hyde	15/10/19	17/10/19 11am	22/10/19	25/10/19
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Report from the Homelessness Review</li> </ul>	Emma Collingwood	20/8/19	23/8/19 1pm	27/8/19	30/8/19
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children's rights and advocacy services</li> </ul>	Amandip Johal	15/10/19	17/10/19 11am	22/10/19	25/10/19
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mental health services for Looked After Children and those in need of help and protection</li> </ul>	Joint Ali Jan Haider/David Byrom/Jenny Robb/heather Wilson /Sasha Bhat	15/10/19	17/10/19 11am	22/10/19	25/10/19
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Forward Plan</li> </ul>	Chair				
<b>20<sup>th</sup> January 2020</b>	<b>Joint Meeting with young people / Keighley or Committee Room 1, City</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Viewpoint- what are young people telling us : Report and discussion</li> </ul>	Imran Cheema	17/12/19	20/12/19 11am	7/1/20	10/1/20

	<b>Hall (TBC)</b>						
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leaving Well App feedback on views</li> </ul>	Emma Collingwood	17/12/19	20/12/19 11am	7/1/20	10/1/20
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Corporate Parenting Report: Place</li> </ul>	Steve Hartley	17/12/19	20/12/19 11am	7/1/20	10/1/20
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Forward Plan</li> </ul>	Chair				
<b>9<sup>th</sup> March 2020</b>	<b>Business Meeting Committee Room 1, City Hall</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Permanence</li> </ul>	David Byrom	18/2/20	21/2/20 11am	25/2/20	28/2/20
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Through care service report</li> </ul>	David Byrom	18/2/20	21/2/20 11am	25/2/20	28/2/20
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Health Services for Children Looked After: CCG and health partners</li> </ul>	TBC	18/2/20	21/2/20 11am	25/2/20	28/2/20
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Corporate Parenting Report: Corporate Services</li> </ul>	TBC	18/2/20	21/2/20 11am	25/2/20	28/2/20
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Forward Plan</li> </ul>	Chair				
<b>6<sup>th</sup> April 2020</b>	<b>Joint Meeting Committee Room 1, City Hall</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Education report on children not in mainstream education, not in education and</li> </ul>	Ken Poucher/Emma Collingwood	17/3/20	20/3/20 11am	24/3/19	27/3/20

		post 16					
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reg 44 report on children's homes</li> </ul>	Suzanne Lythgow	17/3/20	20/3/20 11am	24/3/19	27/3/20
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Corporate Parenting Report:: Health and Wellbeing</li> </ul>	TBC	17/3/20	20/3/20 11am	24/3/19	27/3/20
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Forward Plan</li> </ul>	Chair				

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