

18th March 2019**Agenda Item:13****REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, YOUTH, FAMILIES AND SOCIAL
WORK****ADOPTION EAST MIDLANDS REGIONAL ADOPTION AGENCY: STATEMENT
OF PURPOSE 2019-2020 AND ESTABLISHMENT OF POSTS****Purpose of the Report**

1. To seek approval of the Adoption East Midlands Regional Adoption Agency Statement of Purpose for 2019-2020, attached as **Appendix 1**.
2. To seek approval for the establishment of 49.18 FTE new posts for the Adoption East Midlands Regional Adoption Agency.
3. To seek approval of proposed adopter recruitment activity and publicity for May and June 2019, which will include publicity about the new Adoption East Midlands Regional Adoption Agency.

Information

4. The Government legislated to regionalise adoption services in the 2016 Education and Adoption Act, stating its intention that all individual local authority adoption agencies be combined into regional adoption agencies by 2020. As set out in the report to Policy Committee on 14 November 2018, the Regional Adoption Agency (RAA) for D2N2 (Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire) will be hosted by Nottinghamshire from 1 April 2019 and involve the transfer of adoption staff in scope from partner authorities by Transfer of Undertaking (Protection of Employment) Regulations (TUPE).
5. It is a statutory requirement that all adoption providers have an up to date statement of purpose in compliance with the Adoption and Children's Act 2002, Adoption Agency Regulations (2003, 2011), Adoption Support Regulations 2005, and National Minimum Adoption Standards. Adoption regulations require adoption agencies to provide a clear statement of the aims and objectives of an Adoption Agency and the strategy for meeting those aims and objectives on an annual basis.
6. The Statement of Purpose provides details of:
 - the quality standards and principles which underpin the service
 - an overview of services provided by the Agency, including support services

- activity
- management structure, numbers, qualifications and experience of the staff
- quality assurance and external monitoring mechanisms
- complaints
- quality assurance.

7. Policy Committee approved the RAA staffing model and the process by which staff from partner authorities would transfer by TUPE. However, the exact details of new posts could not be set out because consultation with Nottinghamshire and partner authority staff had not yet taken place. The consultation process took place over November and December 2018, and included workshops and group presentations involving all affected staff and trades unions representatives. An interim staff structure has been developed which takes into account feedback from the consultation process, and includes all of the staff in scope. This structure is subject to change over the coming months as efficiencies are realised and some vacant posts disestablished. The new posts are listed in **paragraph 9**.
8. The total staffing model for the RAA, including current vacancies and staff already employed by Nottinghamshire County Council, is 80.98 FTE. Of this total, 49.18 FTE are new posts to be established at a total cost of £2,000,123 which will be funded from the agreed RAA budget.
9. The proposed new posts to be established and their associated costs are set out in the table below:

POSTS TO BE ESTABLISHED			
Post Title	Grade/Band	FTE	Total Cost
Group Manager, Regional Adoption	Band TBC	1	£85,274 ¹
Service Manager	Band E	1	£59,924
Team Manager	Band D	4.3	£231,478
Social Worker	Band B	28.73	£1,267,252
Panel Manager	Band C	0.6	£30,108
SWSO	Grade 4	3.54	£94,667
Business Support Administrator	Grade 3	10.01	£231,421
TOTAL:		49.18	£2,000,123

10. The Group Manager post will be an interim post until it is permanently recruited to in September 2019. This will provide six months for the new RAA to establish itself under the interim postholder. The detail of the permanent recruitment to this post will be brought to Children and Young People's Committee in October 2019, and will also set out the progress of the new RAA and request approval for any posts which are to be disestablished in order to arrive at the preferred organisational structure.

¹ Up to £85,274 has been included in the staffing budget for this post, pending job evaluation.

11. RAA staff from partner local authorities will remain based in their current premises.
12. Adoption East Midlands will meet the placement needs of approximately 180 children with an adoption plan per year. There is a national shortage of adopters, particularly for older children and sibling groups. Adoption East Midlands seeks to maximise recruitment opportunities, using existing low cost methods, such as social media, based on adopters' stories, and also the development of the Regional Adoption Agency. There will be information events, and drop in opportunities across the region, and Adoption East Midlands will seek to harness media interest in the regionalisation agenda in order to promote the need for adoptive families, for children waiting,
13. Foster care fortnight is 13 to 26 May 2019, in which the Regional Adoption Agency expects to work with fostering services to be present at joint events. Specific adoption recruitment activity will take place after these dates.

Other Options Considered

14. No other options were considered as the approach followed by these proposals in establishing the new RAA staff posts was approved by Policy Committee on 14 November 2018.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

15. The report seeks approval of the 2019-2020 Statement of Purpose for Adoption East Midlands.
16. The details of the proposed establishment of new posts is a result of careful planning between the partner authorities as well as appropriate consultation with those staff in scope to transfer to Nottinghamshire.
17. The new posts are a requirement for the successful operation of the RAA and a precursor to the transfer of staff from partner authorities by TUPE, as approved by Policy Committee on 14 November 2018.
18. The new Regional Adoption Agency will need to constantly recruit adopters in order to meet the needs of local children. Recruitment activity and publicity shortly after launch will help make the agency known to adopters across the whole region of Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire, and ensure that potential adopters have all the information they need to come forward to adopt local children.

Statutory and Policy Implications

19. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Data Protection and Information Governance

20. The Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) has been completed and, at the time of writing, is in the process of sign off. It is anticipated that the document will have been approved by the time of this meeting.

Financial Implications

21. The RAA will be delivered at no additional cost to Nottinghamshire as the host. The 2019-20 indicative budget is £5,324,917 with contributions from each partner authority.
22. The total staffing budget for the RAA is £3.4m and this will cover the additional cost of the 49.18 FTE new posts, £2,000,123, and the existing 31.8 FTE Nottinghamshire posts.
23. There will be some differences in pay and on-costs for TUPE'd staff and a contingency has been included in the budget to allow for this. The need for this contingency will diminish over time due to staff turnover and potential efficiencies.
24. It is expected that the cost of the proposed adopter recruitment activity and publicity, and that for the new Adoption East Midlands Regional Adoption Agency, will be low because existing channels of communication and social media will be used where ever possible. If there are any costs these will be met from the Adoption East Midlands budget.

Human Resources Implications

25. The HR implications of these proposals are outlined in **paragraphs 7-11**.

Smarter Working Implications

26. Smarter working policies have been considered throughout the development of the RAA and the implications for staff working at partner authority premises.

Safeguarding of Children and Adults at Risk Implications

27. Nottinghamshire will host the RAA on behalf of the other D2N2 councils and all safeguarding responsibilities for Nottinghamshire children will remain the responsibility of Nottinghamshire County Council. Each partner will however still retain statutory responsibility for their own children for whom adoption is the permanence plan.

Implications for Service Users

28. Regionalisation should improve outcomes for children, adopters and adoptive families.

RECOMMENDATION/S

That the Committee:

- 1) approves the Adoption East Midlands Regional Adoption Agency Statement of Purpose for 2019-2020, attached as **Appendix 1**.

- 2) approves the establishment of 49.18 FTE new staff posts for the Adoption East Midlands Regional Adoption Agency as detailed in **paragraph 9**.
- 3) approves the proposed adoption recruitment activity for May and June 2019, which will also publicise the Adoption East Midlands Regional Adoption Agency.

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Constitutional Comments (EP 08/02/19)

29. The recommendation falls within the remit of the Children and Young People's Committee by virtue of its terms of reference.

Financial Comments (SAS 05/03/19)

30. The financial implications of the report are contained within paragraphs 21 to 24 above.

HR Comments (BC 04/03/19)

31. The staffing implications are contained within the body of the report. Appropriate consultation has occurred with staff and trade unions as part of TUPE requirements.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- Regional Adoption Agency (D2N2 RAA) Business Case
- Equality Impact Assessment
- Establishment of the D2N2 Regional Adoption Agency – report to Children and Young People's Committee on 23 April 2018
- Business case for the establishment of a Regional Adoption Agency for Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire councils (D2N2) – report to Policy Committee on 14 November 2018

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.

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