

CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD – 31st March 2014

Title of paper:	Adoption Scorecard Performance Update	
Director(s)/ Corporate Director(s):	Helen Blackman, Director – Safeguarding	Wards affected: ALL
Report author(s) and contact details:	Robert Fagan (Innovation and Change Manager, Fostering and Adoption), 0115 8764605, robert.fagan@nottinghamcity.gov.uk Kwesi Williams (Project Officer – Children in Care), 0115 8762684, kwesi.williams@nottinghamcity.gov.uk	
Other colleagues who have provided input:		
Date of consultation with Portfolio Holder(s) (if relevant)	18th March 2014	
Relevant Council Plan Strategic Priority:		
Cutting unemployment by a quarter		<input type="checkbox"/>
Cut crime and anti-social behaviour		<input type="checkbox"/>
Ensure more school leavers get a job, training or further education than any other City		<input type="checkbox"/>
Your neighbourhood as clean as the City Centre		<input type="checkbox"/>
Help keep your energy bills down		<input type="checkbox"/>
Good access to public transport		<input type="checkbox"/>
Nottingham has a good mix of housing		<input type="checkbox"/>
Nottingham is a good place to do business, invest and create jobs		<input type="checkbox"/>
Nottingham offers a wide range of leisure activities, parks and sporting events		<input type="checkbox"/>
Support early intervention activities		<input type="checkbox"/>
Deliver effective, value for money services to our citizens		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Summary of issues (including benefits to citizens/service users):		
<p>The report summarises the performance of the local authority from April 2013 to date against internal targets and in line with the DfE scorecard. It also outlines the impact of some of the activities introduced within the context of the Government’s adoption and fostering reform agenda to minimise delay in adoption.</p>		
Recommendation(s):		
1	It is recommended that the Corporate Parenting Board notes the activities that are being undertaken to tackle delays in adoption.	
2	To note the progress being made in improving our performance against the Adoption Scorecard.	

1. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

1.1 These recommendations will enable us to show compliance with government guidance and inform Corporate Parenting Board and management of activities been undertaken by Fostering and Adoption Service.

2. BACKGROUND (INCLUDING OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION)

2.1 The scorecards were introduced as part of a new approach as set out in 'An action plan for adoption: tackling delay' (March 2012).

2.2 The scorecards allow local authorities and other adoption agencies to monitor their own performance and compare it with that of others at critical points in the child's journey towards adoption. The 3 scorecard indicators are:

- Indicator 1 - Average time between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family, for children who have been adopted.
- Indicator 2 - 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 3 - Measures the number and percentage of children who wait less than 14 months between entering care and moving in with their adoptive family (2013-2016)

2.3 The government are incrementally reducing the timescale by which children should be adopted year on year as illustrated in the table below. Initially Nottingham performed well against the targets but the recent reduction in timescales in year two (2010-2013) has created challenges.

Table to show scorecard thresholds for Indicator 1 & 2

Financial years	Indicator 1 threshold		Indicator 2 threshold	
	(months)	(weeks)	(months)	(weeks)
2010 to 2013	20	87	6	26
2011 to 2014	18	78	5	22
2012 to 2015	16	69	4	17
2013 to 2016	14	61	4	17

2.4 These challenges are being responded to with a series of measures that have been introduced to improve performance in adoption and reduce delay, which include:

- A new Foster Carer and Adopter Marketing and Recruitment Strategy including staff communication plan.
- Two Customer Service Officers to support adopters and prospective adopters, also managing the Adopter's Application Process (AAP) – Adopters application journey.
- A more coordinated and systematic use of the AAJ throughout the service.
- Implementation of the 2 Stage Adoption Application Procedure.
- Use of the temporary fast track Social Workers at key stages of the child's journey through the adoption process.
- From Jan 2014 increase the number of Approval and Matching Panels and the number of cases per panel.
- Introduction of robust performance management systems to incorporate key stages of the adoption journey.
- Adoption Activity Flow Chart – Extension of the AAJ and AAP to incorporate better planning and increase staff awareness of the overall process

- Review of Post Order Services to increase the confidence and ability of adopters in taking on more challenging children
- A rolling programme of information evenings, matching events and activity days.

2.4 The full impact of these measures will take some time to be embedded into the service, however there are signs that the measures are starting to have a favourable impact on adoption performance e.g.

- Currently 40 children have been adopted to date with the potential for an additional 4 by year end
- Adoption activity and permanency planning has resulted in 43 Special Guardianship Orders' this is a 60% increase on last year's performance.
- Improved on scorecard indicator 1 by 6 weeks over 2012-13
- There has been a 42% (2013-14 to date 263) increase in Adopter application activity to date when compared to 2012-13 (185)
- To date 31 Adopter applications have been approved compared to 21 in 2012-13
- There's been 43 matches to date compared to 27 in 2012-13

3. **OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED IN MAKING RECOMMENDATIONS**

3.1 None

4. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS (INCLUDING VALUE FOR MONEY/VAT)**

4.1 None

5. **RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES (INCLUDING LEGAL IMPLICATIONS AND CRIME AND DISORDER ACT IMPLICATIONS)**

5.1 None

6. **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has not been carried out as this report does not include proposals for new or changing policies, services or functions

Not needed (report does not contain proposals or financial decisions)

No

Yes – Equality Impact Assessment attached

Due regard should be given to the equality implications identified in the EIA.

7. **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS OTHER THAN PUBLISHED WORKS OR THOSE DISCLOSING CONFIDENTIAL OR EXEMPT INFORMATION**

7.1 None

8. **PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS REFERRED TO IN COMPILING THIS REPORT**

8.1 An action plan for adoption: tackling delay' (March 2012).