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Report of Director of Children's Services

Report to West Yorkshire Adoption Joint Committee

Date: 15th March 2017

Subject: Structure Report

Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?

Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?

Yes No

If relevant, access to information procedure rule number:

Appendix number:

Summary of main issues

1. In December 2016 the Cabinet and Executive Boards across West Yorkshire endorsed arrangements for a new regional adoption agency titled One Adoption Agency West Yorkshire (the Agency) and put in place the arrangements necessary for the creation of an organisational unit within Leeds City Council for the West Yorkshire Adoption Agency. The lead officer for this will be the Director of Children's Services (DCS) and the unit will sit within Children's Services.
2. The boards also endorsed the transfer of staff via TUPE from other Local Authorities into the employment of Leeds City Council to work within the RAA;
3. This report sets out the progression of these arrangements

Recommendations

1. The Joint Committee is requested to:
 - 1.1 Note the structural arrangements and to support the progression of these arrangements.

1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 This report sets out the structural and reporting arrangements for the Regional Adoption Agency.

2. Background information

- 2.1 In December 2016 the Cabinet and Executive Boards across West Yorkshire endorsed arrangements for a new regional adoption agency titled One Adoption Agency West Yorkshire (the Agency) and put in place the arrangements necessary for the creation of an organisational unit within Leeds City Council for the West Yorkshire Adoption Agency. The lead officer for this will be the Director of Children's Services (DCS) and the unit will sit within Children's Services.
- 2.2 The boards also endorsed the transfer of staff via TUPE from other Local Authorities into the employment of Leeds City Council to work within the RAA;
- 2.3 This report sets out the progression of these arrangements
- 2.4 For Members ease of reference the structure chart of the agency is attached at Appendix A.

3. Main issues

Staffing Structure

- 3.1 The staffing structure of the RAA has been designed with reference to the application of best practice drawn from West Yorkshire, the voluntary sector and extensive research and has been endorsed by the Shadow Management Board. There has been ongoing consultation with the unions regarding the implications for staff implications and any measures envisaged arising from the transfer.
- 3.2 Staff from Bradford, Wakefield, Kirklees and Calderdale adoption services are in the process of transferring into the employment of Leeds City Council, within the RAA pursuant to the Transfer of undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 (TUPE). Detailed HR processes to address assimilation, due diligence are underway as well as formal consultation with the trade unions in the coming months.
- 3.3 Leeds City Council will be employing around 105 Full time equivalent staff to discharge the function. This will include both existing LCC employees and approximately 60 staff from the other 4 West Yorkshire local authorities. The Head of Service has been appointed and there are a number of vacancies across the management posts of the agencies with recruitment to these posts is underway.
- 3.4 The Regional Adoption Agency will be based in Leeds and staff will be based in offices in all 5 local authority areas. Appropriate arrangements are being put in place to ensure that they have adequate resources.

Corporate Parenting Responsibilities

- 3.5 The RAA will work in partnership with social work services in each Local Authority (LA). Each LA will retain the corporate parenting responsibility for looked after children and each Local Authority will still retain the responsibility for decisions about the planning for children and the match with a family.
- 3.6 The RAA will be a regional agency with an emphasis on the local delivery of services. The RAA will retain a base in each local authority office and will work with

each LA to ensure that children's needs are prioritised and that there is a sense of urgency in the planning for children regarding permanence. This will also ensure that families are recruited to meet children's needs and that adoption support can be delivered effectively at a local level.

Management Board

- 3.7 The operational accountability of the regional agency will be to the Management Board, which will comprise senior officers delegated by each Director Children Services with representation drawn also from other stakeholders, including the Adopter Voice forum and the Voluntary Adoption Alliance. The management board will meet 2 monthly to review both RAA functioning and also the impact for West Yorkshire's children, adopters and birth families. Specifically it will promote good performance in relation to the Delegated Functions, reflecting added value brought by the RAA in outcomes for children and their adoptive families; monitor the budget allocated to the RAA and review value for money achieved by the RAA.

4. Corporate considerations

4.1 Consultation and engagement

- 4.1.1 The transfer of the adoption function to the regional agency and staff from other Local Authorities to Leeds has required detailed HR processes to address TUPE, assimilation, due diligence etc. as well as formal consultation with the trade unions. This is ongoing.

4.2 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration

- 4.2.1 There are no implications for this report.

4.3 Resources and value for money

- 4.3.1 There are no implications for this report.

4.4 Legal implications and access to information

- 4.4.1 There are no implications for this report

4.5 Risk management

- 4.5.1 There are no implications for this report.

5. Recommendations

The Joint Committee is requested to:

- 5.1.1 Note the structural arrangements and to support the progression of these arrangements.

6. Background documents¹

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website,

6.1 None

unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.