

## Record of Officer Decision

This form is the written record of a key or significant operational decision taken by an officer.

<b>Decision type</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Key Decision	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Significant Operational Decision
<b>Director<sup>1</sup></b>	Director of Children and Families	
<b>Contact person:</b>	Catherine Henderson	Telephone number: 0113 3785430
<b>Subject<sup>2</sup>:</b>	Direct contract award to Coram-i for National Adoption Recruitment Strategy Development: engagement and coproduction with adopters	
<b>Decision details:</b>	What decision has been taken? <sup>3</sup>	
	<p>The Head of Service for One Adoption West Yorkshire agreed to waive CPRs 8.1 and 8.2 (intermediate value procurement) and award a seven month contract direct to Coram-i to support the development of the National Adoption Recruitment Strategy through engagement and coproduction with adopters. The contract will start on 01/09/2020 and run until 31/03/2021, with the option to extend by a further 12 months. The maximum value of this decision is £45,000.</p>	
	<p>A brief statement of the reasons for the decision<sup>4</sup></p> <p><u>Background</u></p> <p>In July 2019 the DfE made available grant funding for the RAA Leader's Group to fund national and regional projects across the adoption system, particularly focusing on finding adoptive families for the harder to place children currently waiting. Activities included:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A national digital campaign to target potential adopters during National Adoption Week</li> <li>2. Sector engagement focused around engaging BAME communities through black majority churches and mosques</li> </ol> <p>In December 2019 the DfE announced that Round 2 of additional grant funding will be provided to Regional Adoption Agencies (RAAs), working with voluntary organisations around the country, to run recruitment campaigns in 2020 aimed at finding adoptive families for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) children. RAA leaders have once again agreed to collectively to pool the resources, working collaboratively to achieve better outcomes for children waiting for adoption.</p> <p>The DfE have approved OAWY to act as a central repository for the grant funds on behalf of all RAAs.</p>	

<sup>1</sup> With delegated authority set out in Constitution

<sup>2</sup> If the decision is key and has appeared on the list of forthcoming key decisions, the title of the decision should be the same as that used in the list

<sup>3</sup> Set out all necessary decisions to be taken by the decision taker including decisions in relation to exempt information, exemption from call in etc.

<sup>4</sup> Include any significant financial, procurement, legal or equalities implications, having consulted with Finance, PACS, Legal or Equality colleagues as appropriate.

The regional recruitment drives will have a particular focus on finding families for these children, as well as groups that the system has not previously prioritised, including siblings and older children, helping make sure there are enough adopters around the country and helping reverse the trend in data swiftly.

The RAA leaders group are working together to develop a national approach to raising awareness generally and addressing some regional priorities, including BAME recruitment. Alongside this, a small steering group has been assembled with VAA involvement where decisions can be made on what and how the funds are spent across the country over a period of time.

### Main issues

This is a priority procurement that enables the authority to fulfil its statutory function in relation to regional adoption services.

This service is funded through a ring-fenced DfE grant allocation, therefore does not add any additional pressures on the LCC budget.

Coram-i are well placed to deliver this work being a key partner in the development of the recruitment strategy and they also are the secretariat for the national adopter reference group that is part of the Adoption and Special Guardianship leadership board and have systems in place to support the co-production of the strategy with adopters already able and ready to be part of the discussions.

The National Recruitment Steering group is developing a national adoption recruitment campaign with a number of working groups undertaking specific tasks around BAME engagement, customer journey, digital and marketing and communication sub groups. The adopter reference group will be providing support to review the strategy and to ensure that the messages to recruit adopters are appropriate and they will also be involved in the implementation of the strategy as required as part of the campaign and strategy.

This contract is intended to support delivery of a national recruitment boost across England throughout April 2020 – March 2021.

Coram-i have submitted a proposal to detail what will be delivered and how costs are calculated. Performance and outcomes will be overseen by the RAA Adoption Recruitment Steering Group.

### **Finance**

The maximum value of this contract is £15,000 for seven months, £45,000 if the extension is taken up in full.

This value is based on ethics fees for adopters attending meetings; costs for sourcing adopters plus planning and support for meetings; and additional costs for any regular meetings after October.

This funding is additional revenue funding that is ring fenced to deliver the outcomes specified in the DfE grant agreement. This pooled resource will provide best value for money across all RAAs as it provides an opportunity to

develop new approaches to the recruitment of adopters at a regional and national level. The

The grant is managed by OAWY on behalf of all RAAs, with Leeds acting as the lead local authority. The activities are to be determined by the RAA Adoption Recruitment Steering Group.

The value of any extension will be confirmed if the decision is taken to extend, based on the above costs and maximum values.

The OAWY finance officer has confirmed there is a budget available for the above service.

**Appendix 1**

**What is your reason for waiving CPRs?**

There is a genuine, unforeseeable emergency meaning there is no time to go through a procurement process e.g. to deal with the consequences of extreme weather.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
To purchase supplies or services on particularly advantageous terms due to liquidation/administration.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Requirement to put a contract in place with a current provider whilst a review of the services is completed.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Ran out of time to undertake a new procurement exercise	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Other (please provide summary here)  Coram-i are well placed to deliver this work being a key partner in the development of the recruitment strategy and they also are the secretariat for the national adopter reference group that is part of the Adoption and Special Guardianship leadership board and have systems in place to support the co-production of the strategy with adopters already able and ready to be part of the discussions.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

Brief details of any alternative options considered and rejected by the officer at the time of making the decision

No other options were considered for the reasons noted in the main issues and Appendix 1 of this report (above).


<b>Affected wards:</b>	N/A		
<b>Details of consultation undertaken<sup>5</sup>:</b>	Executive Member		
	Ward Councillors		
	Others National Adopters Steering Group LCC Procurement and Legal		
<b>Implementation</b>	Officer accountable, and proposed timescales for implementation Sarah Johal. Contract start date anticipated to be 8 December 2020		
<b>List of Forthcoming Key Decisions<sup>6</sup></b>	Date Added to List: N/A		
	<b>If Special Urgency or General Exception</b> a brief statement of the reason why it is impracticable to delay the decision		
	<b>If Special Urgency</b> Relevant Scrutiny Chair(s)		
	Signature		Date
<b>Call In</b>	Is the decision available <sup>7</sup> for call-in?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	<b>If exempt from call-in</b> , the reason why call-in would prejudice the interests of the council or the public:		
<b>Approval of Decision</b>	Authorised decision maker <sup>8</sup>		

<sup>5</sup> Include details of any interest disclosed by an elected Member on consultation and the date of any relevant dispensation given.

<sup>6</sup> Complete this section for key decisions only

<sup>7</sup> Significant operational decisions are never available for call in. Key decisions are always available for call in unless they have been exempted from call in.

<sup>8</sup> Give the post title and name of the officer with appropriate delegated authority to take the decision.

		Date: 20/10/20
	Signature: Sarah Johal	

## Appendix 2

### 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.

A **screening** process can help judge relevance and provides a record of both the **process** and **decision**. Screening should be a short, sharp exercise that determines relevance for all new and revised strategies, policies, services and functions. Completed at the earliest opportunity it will help to determine:

- the relevance of proposals and decisions to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration.
- whether or not equality, diversity, cohesion and integration is being or has already been considered, and
- whether or not it is necessary to carry out an impact assessment.

<b>Directorate:</b> Children and Families	<b>Service area:</b> One Adoption West Yorkshire
<b>Lead person:</b> Cathering Henderson	<b>Contact number:</b> 0113 3785430

<b>1. Title:</b> Delivery of a national strategy for the recruitment of adopters
Is this a:
<input type="checkbox"/> Strategy / Policy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Service / Function <input type="checkbox"/> Other
If other, please specify

## 2. Please provide a brief description of what you are screening

- Contract award for National Adoption Recruitment Strategy Development: engagement and coproduction with adopters.
- Services will include sourcing and preparing adopters to participate in a number of meetings, planning for these meetings and support during meetings.
- This contract is intended to support delivery of a national recruitment boost across England throughout April 2020 – March 2021 through engagement and coproduction with adopters.
- The overall challenge in recruiting adopters in England is the lack of understanding and awareness of what adoption is and who is eligible to adopt. There are many misconceptions about adoption, and these need to be explicitly and positively addressed to ensure people have the correct and motivating information so people do not rule themselves out based on false beliefs and assumptions, e.g. single people cannot adopt.
- There remain long standing issues in placing children in sibling groups and children from black and minority ethnic backgrounds. These children traditionally wait longer to be matched with a new adoptive family – along with older children and those with a disability. The recruitment of adopters from black and minority ethnic backgrounds remains a particular challenge for adoption agencies.
- The adoption reform programme has had some success in reducing waiting times, but for children from black and minority ethnic backgrounds, the waiting time was 18 months in 2018, compared to the average of 14 months across all children. Latest statistics provided by the Consortium of Voluntary Adoption Agencies show that 2017/18 saw an increase in registrations of black and minority ethnic adopters compared to the previous two years, but this is still down from a peak in 2014/15. The latest data shows that of the 2,700 children waiting for adoption, almost 40 per cent have waited over 18 months - of these, 24% were from BAME backgrounds.

## 3. Relevance to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration

All the council's strategies and policies, service and functions affect service users, employees or the wider community – city wide or more local. These will also have a greater or lesser relevance to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration.

The following questions will help you to identify how relevant your proposals are.

When considering these questions think about age, carers, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation. Also those areas that impact on or relate to equality: tackling poverty and improving health and well-being.

Questions	Yes	No
Is there an existing or likely differential impact for the different equality characteristics?		x
Have there been or likely to be any public concerns about the policy or proposal?		x
Could the proposal affect how our services, commissioning or procurement activities are organised, provided, located and by		x

whom?		
Could the proposal affect our workforce or employment practices?		x
Does the proposal involve or will it have an impact on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Eliminating unlawful discrimination, victimisation and harassment</li> <li>Advancing equality of opportunity</li> <li>Fostering good relations</li> </ul>	x	

If you have answered **no** to the questions above please complete **sections 6 and 7**

If you have answered **yes** to any of the above and;

- Believe you have already considered the impact on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration within your proposal please go to **section 4**.
- Are not already considering the impact on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration within your proposal please go to **section 5**.

#### 4. Considering the impact on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration

If you can demonstrate you have considered how your proposals impact on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration you have carried out an impact assessment.

Please provide specific details for all three areas below (use the prompts for guidance).

- How have you considered equality, diversity, cohesion and integration?**  
(**think about** the scope of the proposal, who is likely to be affected, equality related information, gaps in information and plans to address, consultation and engagement activities (taken place or planned) with those likely to be affected)

- Key findings**  
(**think about** any potential positive and negative impact on different equality characteristics, potential to promote strong and positive relationships between groups, potential to bring groups/communities into increased contact with each other, perception that the proposal could benefit one group at the expense of another)
  - The primary aim of the DfE grant funding is to recruit more adopters and to promote adoption of the most vulnerable children awaiting adoption to prospective adopters
  - This proposal will provide a positive impact in respect of equality and diversity in that it will advance equality of opportunity for children that are looked after, particularly those most vulnerable i.e. those with special educational needs and disabilities; those from BME backgrounds; sibling groups and older children awaiting adoption

- Actions**  
(**think about** how you will promote positive impact and remove/ reduce negative impact)

**5. If you are not already considering the impact on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration you will need to carry out an impact assessment.**

Date to scope and plan your impact assessment:

Date to complete your impact assessment

Lead person for your impact assessment  
(Include name and job title)

### 6. Governance, ownership and approval

Please state here who has approved the actions and outcomes of the screening

Name	Job title	Date
Sarah Johal	Head of One Adoption West Yorkshire	
<b>Date screening completed</b>		06/10/20

### 7. 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 screening 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 screenings 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 screening 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:



