

**Subject:** Annual Adoption Agency Report  
**Date of Meeting:** 2 November 2009  
**Report of:** Director of Children's Services  
**Contact Officer:** Name: Sharon Donnelly Tel: 29-5549  
E-mail: sharon.donnelly@brighton-hove.gov.uk  
**Key Decision:** No Forward Plan No: N/A  
**Wards Affected:** All

### FOR GENERAL RELEASE

#### 1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 Standard 17.3 of the National Minimum Standards for Local Adoption Services (England) 2003 requires the Adoption Agency to produce an Annual Report to be received by the Council Executive. The annual report for 2008/9 found in Appendix 1 provides full information about adoption activity and compliance with the national adoption standards within the Children & Young People's Trust and a profile of the work of the Adoption and Permanence teams with the Fostering & Adoption Service.
- 1.2 Standard 1.2 of the National Minimum Standards for Local Adoption Services (England) 2003 requires that the statement of purpose is endorsed by the Council's executive annually. The revised statement of purpose can be found in Appendix 2.

#### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the Annual Adoption Agency Report and the progress of the Agency in relation to adoption and permanence activity be noted.
- 2.2. That the revised Adoption Agency Statement of Purpose (Appendix 2) be endorsed.

#### 3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:

- 3.1 See Annual Adoption Agency Report

#### 4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 The Annual Adoption Agency report has been compiled in collaboration with managers from the Adoption and Fostering service and the report of the Independent Chair of Panel has been compiled in consultation with Panel members

## 5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

### Financial Implications:

- 5.1 The spending on Adoption Allowances in 2008-09 totalled £617812. This represented a reduction of 8.45% when compared to the 2007-08 outturn figure. In addition, expenditure in the sum of £26292 was incurred in respect of a number of 'one-off' costs such as Setting Up Allowances, Contact, Prospective Adopters and Therapy.

*Finance Officer Consulted: Brian McGonigle*

*Date: September 2009*

### Legal Implications:

- 5.2 The work of the Adoption Agency (Brighton & Hove City Council) is governed by the Adoption and Children Act 2002, and accompanying statutory regulations and guidance. The Adoption and Permanence Panel is required as a matter of law to make recommendations to the Adoption Agency regarding the approval or otherwise of prospective adopters and children for adoption, and also to approve matches with particular adopters. The membership of the Panel is governed by the Adoption Agencies Regulations 2005.

Children can only be adopted or made the subject of Special Guardianship orders with the approval of the Court, after rigorous analysis, which now includes consideration of whether or not there should be continuing contact facilitated with any member of the birth family post adoption.

The authority is required to plan and provide support services to children and families involved in adoption or Special Guardianship, and under the Children Act 2004, this should be with the active assistance of all the partners under the Trust.

The developments in legislation are all compatible with Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights, which upholds the right to respect for family and private life, except where an interference is in accordance with the law and is necessary for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.

*Lawyer Consulted: Natasha Watson*

*Date: September 2009*

### Equalities Implications:

- 5.3 The Adoption and Children Act 2002 aligns adoption law with the relevant provisions of the Children Act 1989 to ensure that a child's welfare is the paramount consideration in decisions relating to adoption. The 'welfare' of the child includes having regard to a child's age, sex, religious persuasion, racial origin, and cultural and linguistic background

The adoption agency has an explicitly inclusive recruitment strategy and also employs a recruitment officer for BME carers and adopters. An Equalities impact assessment is due to be undertaken in 2009/10

### Sustainability Implications:

- 5.4 None have been identified.

Crime & Disorder Implications:  
5.5 None have been identified.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:  
5.6 None have been identified.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:  
5.7 The annual report focuses on the work of a city wide service within the CYPT.

**6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):**

6.1 None

**7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS**

7.1 It is a requirement of the National Adoption Minimum Standards

**SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

**Appendices:**

1. Annual Adoption Agency Report
2. Adoption Agency Statement of Purpose

**Documents In Members' Rooms**

1. Annual Adoption Agency Report
2. Adoption Agency Statement of Purpose

**Background Documents**

1. Annual Fostering Service Report 2008/9

