

SUBJECT: South East Wales Adoption Service

MEETING: Children and Young People's Select Committee

DATE: Monday 22nd February 2016

DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: ALL

1. PURPOSE:

- 1.1. To inform scrutiny of the progress made by the South East Wales Adoption Service since it was formed as part of the National Adoption Service in April 2014.
- 1.2 The National Adoption Service (NAS) has developed a protocol outlining the role of the nominated regional councillor who sits on the NAS governance board and their links into their collaborative Local Authorities. This protocol highlights the need for formal arrangements to be in place to report on the performance of the regional and national elements of the National Adoption Service. This report is part of the formal arrangements required.
- 1.3 The report highlights the 1st year's performance of the National Adoption Service. The report attached has been presented to scrutiny in Blaenau Gwent, who are the host Authority for SEWAS.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 It is recommended members scrutinise the developments and performance of the regional and national elements of the National Adoption Service highlighted in the report.
- 2.2 Advise future data and information requirements regarding Monmouthshire specific information in addition to the annual NAS requirements if Members feel that this would be helpful.

3. KEY ISSUES:

- 3.1 South East Wales Adoption Service (SEWAS) commenced on the 1st April 2014.
- 3.2 The attached report from Blaenau Gwent provides the background and context to the service and provides the data from a national perspective. The report also advises a note of caution as the data contained in the report has been collated for the first time. A need for improved data collection has been recognised and put in place.

- 3.3 The report does not provide specific data regarding Monmouthshire as the requirement from the National Adoption Service is to provide this on a national and regional basis
- 3.4 The local experience since SEWAS was formed has been very positive with an increase in focus on older and more complex children having the same opportunity for a 'forever' family.
- 3.5 There has been an increase in adoptions as shown in the table below. Figures can vary for adoptions as not all children will have a plan for adoption as an outcome from the Care Proceedings in Court.

Year	Placed for adoption	Children with adoption Orders
15/16 (up to Q3)	6	1
14/15	4	10
13/14	2	
12/13	1	

- 3.6 The psychology support pre and post adoption has been very effective to moving children on to and settling into their adoptive placements. Work to develop this service further continues with SEWAS.

4. REASONS:

- 4.1 SEWAS is still developing and identifying issues that need addressing e.g. data collection as it progresses. The SEWAS Management Committee is attended by Monmouthshire's Head of Children's Services and relevant Service Manager for adoption. In addition this Service Manager attends a link meeting to develop and progress operational development of the service.
- 4.2 The formation of a regional collaborative has proved to be very useful. SEWAS has been successful at recruiting and matching children considered to be hard to place.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

- 5.1 This service is funded from core budget provision and is a collaborative arrangement with the 5 Local Authorities in the Gwent area. The Management Committee for SEWAS ensure that arrangements are in place to resource this service. A partnership arrangement is in place. Monmouthshire contribute £156, 978 in 2015/16 and it is planned the contribution will be the same in 2016/17.

6. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS:

N/A

7. SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING IMPLICATIONS:

This area of Children's Services work complies with the Local Authority Safeguarding and Corporate Parenting requirements.

8. CONSULTEES:

Director Social Care and Health
Children's Services
SEWAS

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Attached Scrutiny Report from Blaenau Gwent

10. AUTHOR:

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