



# CABINET

<b>7.30 pm</b>	<b>Wednesday 16 January 2019</b>	<b>Council Chamber - Town Hall</b>
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Members 9: Quorum 3

Councillor Damian White (Leader of the Council), Chairman

**Cabinet Member responsibility:**

Councillor Robert Benham

Cabinet Member for Education, Children & Families

Councillor Osman Dervish

Cabinet Member for Environment

Councillor Joshua Chapman

Cabinet Member for Housing

Councillor Jason Frost

Cabinet Member for Health & Adult Care Services

Councillor Roger Ramsey

Cabinet Member for Finance & Property

Councillor Viddy Persaud

Cabinet Member for Public Protection and Safety

**Andrew Beesley**  
**Head of Democratic Services**

**For information about the meeting please contact:**

**Debra Marlow tel: 01708 433091**

**e-mail: [debra.marlow@onesource.co.uk](mailto:debra.marlow@onesource.co.uk)**



**Webcast**

**Please note that this meeting will be webcast.  
Members of the public who do not wish to appear  
in the webcast will be able to sit in the balcony,  
which is not in camera range.**

## **Protocol for members of the public wishing to report on meetings of the London Borough of Havering**

Members of the public are entitled to report on meetings of Council, Committees and Cabinet, except in circumstances where the public have been excluded as permitted by law.

Reporting means:-

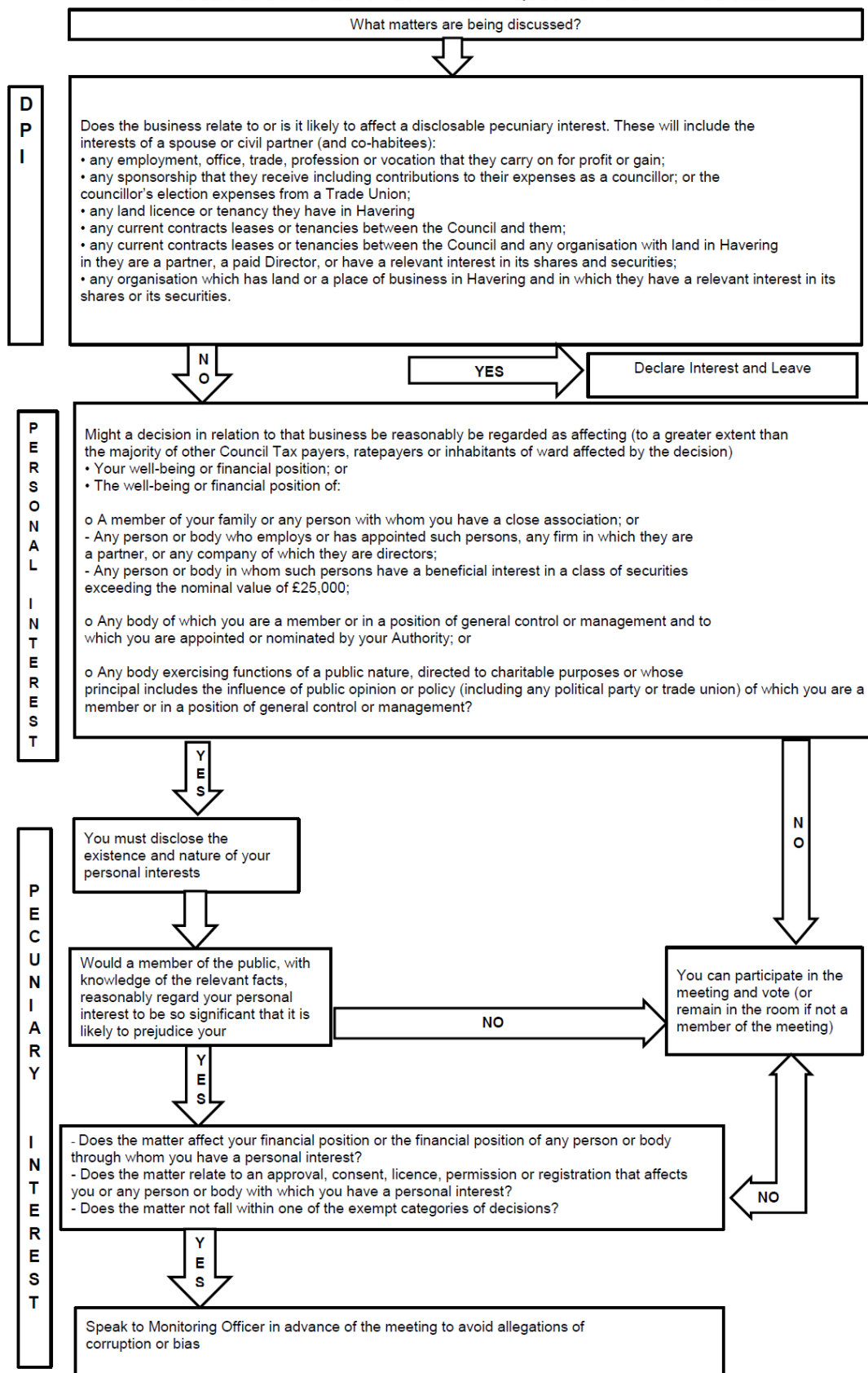
- filming, photographing or making an audio recording of the proceedings of the meeting;
- using any other means for enabling persons not present to see or hear proceedings at a meeting as it takes place or later; or
- reporting or providing commentary on proceedings at a meeting, orally or in writing, so that the report or commentary is available as the meeting takes place or later if the person is not present.

Anyone present at a meeting as it takes place is not permitted to carry out an oral commentary or report. This is to prevent the business of the meeting being disrupted.

Anyone attending a meeting is asked to advise Democratic Services staff on 01708 433076 that they wish to report on the meeting and how they wish to do so. This is to enable employees to guide anyone choosing to report on proceedings to an appropriate place from which to be able to report effectively.

Members of the public are asked to remain seated throughout the meeting as standing up and walking around could distract from the business in hand.

# DECLARING INTERESTS FLOWCHART – QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF



## **AGENDA**

### **1 ANNOUNCEMENTS**

On behalf of the Chairman, there will be an announcement about the arrangements in case of fire or other events that might require the meeting room or building's evacuation.

### **2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

(if any) - receive

### **3 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST**

Members are invited to disclose any interests in any of the items on the agenda at this point of the meeting. Members may still disclose an interest in an item at any time prior to the consideration of the matter.

### **4 MINUTES** (Pages 1 - 14)

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meetings held on 13<sup>th</sup> November, 2018 and 12<sup>th</sup> December, 2018, and to authorise the Chairman to sign them.

### **5 BUSINESS RATES - DISCRETIONARY REVALUATION SUPPORT SCHEME** (Pages 15 - 22)

### **6 HOMEBUILDING CAPACITY FUND - APPLICATION FOR GRANT FROM THE GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY (GLA)** (Pages 23 - 28)

### **7 ADOPT LONDON EAST** (Pages 29 - 130)



**MINUTES OF A CABINET MEETING**  
**Council Chamber - Town Hall**  
**Tuesday, 13 November 2018**  
**(7.30 - 8.45 pm)**

**Present:**

Councillor Damian White (Leader of the Council), Chairman

Councillor Robert Benham

Councillor Osman Dervish

Councillor Joshua Chapman

Councillor Jason Frost

Councillor Roger Ramsey

Councillor Viddy Persaud

Councillor Keith Darvill

**Cabinet Member responsibility:**

Cabinet Member for Education,  
Children & Families

Cabinet Member for Environment

Cabinet Member for Housing

Cabinet Member for Health & Adult  
Care Services

Cabinet Member for Finance &  
Property

Cabinet Member for Public  
Protection and Safety

**11 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST**

6. Local Implementation Plan submission to Transport for London.

Councillor Joshua Chapman, Non Pecuniary, Councillor Chapman is employed by Transport for London. Councillor Chapman left the meeting and did not vote or take any part in the debate.

8. Havering Colleges Proposed Merger - Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) considerations.

Councillor Keith Darvill, Pecuniary, Councillor Keith Darvill is the Chair of Governors at Havering 6th Form College. He left the meeting and did not participate in the debate.

8. Havering Colleges Proposed Merger - Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) considerations.

Councillor Robert Benham, Pecuniary, Councillor Robert Benham is a Governor of Havering 6th Form College and family members are part of the

Havering Pension Scheme. Councillor Benham left the meeting and did not vote or participate in the debate.

**12 MINUTES**

The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> October, 2018 were agreed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

**13 UPHELD CALL-IN REFERRED FROM THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD - UPMINSTER BRIDGE CPZ -RESULTS OF INFORMAL CONSULTATION**

The Cabinet Member for the Environment, Cllr Osman Dervish presented the report to Cabinet. This detailed information following the Call-in of a non-key Executive Decision in relation to the Upminster Bridge Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) proposals and the results of the informal consultation. The matter went to the Overview and Scrutiny Board for consideration and the Call-in was upheld. Members had considered the minutes of that meeting.

The Cabinet Member indicated that he was confident this matter could now go out to further consultation. Ward Councillors who may have objections will be able to engage in the formal process and ensure their views are put forward.

**Cabinet:**

1. AGREED to implement the decision as set out in the Non-key Executive Decision for the Upminster Bridge CPZ – Results of informal consultation, originally made by Councillor Osman Dervish on 21<sup>st</sup> September, 2018.

**14 LOCAL IMPLEMENTATION PLAN SUBMISSION TO TRANSPORT FOR LONDON**

Cllr Osman Dervish presented the report to Cabinet detailing the Borough's submission to Transport for London (TfL) in respect of the Local Implementation Plan (LIP). The LIP is a statutory document which sets out to TfL how the London Borough of Havering intends to deliver the Mayor of London's Transport Strategy (MTS). It represents the Borough's own transport strategy reviewed on an annual basis.

The document before Cabinet is the third LIP (LIP3) prepared by Havering and it aligns with the MTS published in March 2018 for the period up to 2041.

The overarching aim of the MTS is for more travel into London to be taken on foot, by bicycle and by public transport. The Mayor of London has aspirations for 80% of all trips into London to be made by these modes by 2014. The MTS sets out three themes for action by TfL and other partners including London Boroughs which are:

- Healthy streets and healthy people
- A good public transport experience; and
- New homes and jobs.

Havering's draft LIP includes:

- Borough Transport Objectives for Havering;
- A Delivery Plan to show how Havering will deliver objectives over both the long and the short term; and
- Targets to support the delivery of the Mayors outcomes indicators.

The Draft LIP before Cabinet highlighted the continued dependency of the Council on funding from Transport for London to deliver the projects and programmes in the draft LIP3.

The Council is required to explore other alternative funding sources to assist in the LIP delivery and the report makes clear that in challenging economic times these are unlikely to be secured. In the event that funding from TfL is further reduced, and no alternatives are available, then the delivery of the LIP programme will need to be reviewed.

Subject to Cabinet approval, Havering's draft LIP3 must be submitted for consultation with TfL and other stakeholders. Havering must submit its final LIP3 for Mayoral approval in February 2019 and the Mayor intends for all LIP3s to be in place by April 2019.

It also reflects and takes account of the wider strategy in Havering's Local Plan Proposed Submission. The Local Plan sets out the Council's ambitious vision and strategy for future growth and sustainable development over the next 15 years up to 2033.

Subsequent to the submission of the draft LIP3 to TfL it must be the subject of public consultation with specified consultees. The final LIP3 will be submitted to the Mayor in February 2019. Subject to Mayoral approval, Havering's LIP 3 will be effective in 2019 / 2020 and thereafter.

The Lead Member indicated that the submission requirements for 2019/20 broadly reflect those of last year, although there are a number of areas that Boroughs are advised to give particular consideration to, including:

- Road safety (in line with the Mayor's 'Vision zero' initiative);
- Promoting active travel choices (in line with the MTS theme *healthy streets and healthy people*);
- Tackling air quality;
- Public transport accessibility and reliability (in line with the MTS theme *a good public transport experience*);
- Measures that will complement new developments and growth areas (in line with the MTS theme *providing new homes and jobs*);

- Schemes that are being delivered across two financial years; and
- Schemes to support the Crossrail programme.

Where Boroughs are bidding for complimentary funding outside of the LIP programme, they are expected to supplement this with LIP funding contributions to these transport areas.

Most importantly, projects must conform to the Mayor's overarching aim and nine outcomes contained in the MTS. These include:

- London's streets will be healthy and more Londoners will travel actively
- London's streets will be safe and secure
- London's streets will be used more efficiently and have less traffic on them
- London's streets will be clean and green
- The public transport network will meet the needs of a growing London
- Public transport will be safe, affordable and accessible to all
- Journeys by public transport will be pleasant, fast and reliable
- Active, efficient and sustainable travel will be the best option in new developments
- Transport investment will unlock the delivery of new homes and jobs

The Submission must also reflect the Council's own priorities and strategies including those of the new Havering Local Plan.

It was acknowledged that the car ownership target for Havering will be a challenge and that public transport links will need to improve. This will need to be emphasised due to the size and nature of the Borough.

Various schemes will need to be reviewed such as 20 mph zones. Work will also need to link with the development in the Borough and will be an important aspect for the housing developments. Air quality hotspots in the Borough are areas of high bus usage. Cleaner buses need to be in place to help tackle this issue. In addition, feasibility work with consultants regarding the north – south connectivity in the Borough is taking place. This will include the economic viability of trams and light railway links. Efforts will be made to secure further funding to improve transport links making further housing development more attractive.

**Cabinet:**

1. **APPROVED** the draft Havering Local Implementation Plan for public consultation following its submission to Transport for London
2. **DELEGATED** to the Assistant Director of Planning approval to make amendments to the Havering Local Implementation Plan that arise as



a result of the submission to Transport for London and public consultation

3. **DELEGATED** the final approval of the Havering Local Implementation Plan to the Leader of the Council as lead member for strategic planning matters.
4. **AGREED** to the adoption of the Havering Local Implementation Plan by the Lead Member for strategic planning matters.

## 15 **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

There were no press and public in attendance. The meeting went into closed session.

## 16 **HAVERING COLLEGES PROPOSED MERGER - LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME (LGPS) CONSIDERATIONS**

The Cabinet Lead Member for Finance and Property, Cllr Roger Ramsey presented the report to Cabinet. The background to the current situation was outlined.

As a consequence of an increasing number of colleges experiencing financial challenges, the government commenced a national programme of “area based” reviews covering further education and sixth form colleges in 2016, the intention of which is to create fewer, more effective and more sustainable colleges

A number of financial economic challenges facing the colleges were the main driver for a proposed merger. An earlier attempt for HCFHE to merge with Barking and Dagenham did not go ahead. The current proposal is for both the HCFHE and HSFC to merge with NCC.

NCC was created by the merger of Hackney Community College and Tower Hamlets College in 2016, Redbridge College in 2017 and Epping Forest in August 2018. NCC Pensions Administering Authority is the London Pensions Fund Authority (LPFA).

In preparation for the merger the colleges have requested permission from Havering as the Administering Authority to transfer the pension arrangements for all staff of the colleges (current and former employees) from the Havering Pension Fund to the LPFA.

HCFHE has produced a paper setting out the rationale for the merger for members to consider and this is attached as Appendix B to the main report.

The Fund's Actuary (Hymans) has produced a report, at Appendix A, which sets out the possible two scenarios of the proposed mergers to be considered

- a. Scenario A - where all members (actives, deferred and pensioners) transfer out to LPFA.
- b. Scenario B – where only active members transfer their past service out to LPFA.

Secretary of State Approval would be needed to transfer the pension rights of former employees from one LGPS Fund to another under scenario A. Once permission has been granted by Havering then the colleges will proceed with seeking Secretary of State Approval

The Secretary of State will consult with all parties (all three colleges and both Funds) before granting approval. However, if all parties are agreeable, Secretary of State Approval is likely to be granted. The approval process takes about 2 – 3 months to process.

No approval is required from the Secretary of State if only current employees transfer over under scenario B.

Both colleges have confirmed that given their existing and future economic financial pressures they would not be able to proceed with the merger unless all members transferred out to the LPFA under scenario A.

Following general discussion,

**Cabinet:**

1. **CONSIDERED** the Funds Actuary report at Appendix A (exempt)
2. **NOTED** the summary of initial legal advice as the rider to Appendix A (confidential and exempt).
3. **CONSIDERED** the comments from HCFHE on the rationale for the merger of HCFHE and HSFC with NCC at Appendix B (exempt)
4. **AGREED** the College's request to transfer all HCFHE and HSFC members from the Havering Pension Fund to the London Pensions Fund Authority (LPFA) as set out in Option A in this report.
5. **DELEGATED** authority to Chief Operating Officer to take all necessary actions and steps considered appropriate in order to give effect to this decision.

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**Chairman**

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**MINUTES OF A CABINET MEETING**  
**Council Chamber - Town Hall**  
**Wednesday, 12 December 2018**  
**(7.30 - 8.20 pm)**

**Present:**

Councillor Damian White (Leader of the Council), Chairman

**Cabinet Member responsibility:**

Councillor Robert Benham

Cabinet Member for Education,  
Children & Families

Councillor Osman Dervish

Cabinet Member for Environment

Councillor Joshua Chapman

Cabinet Member for Housing

Councillor Jason Frost

Cabinet Member for Health & Adult  
Care Services

Councillor Roger Ramsey

Cabinet Member for Finance &  
Property

Councillor Viddy Persaud

Cabinet Member for Public  
Protection and Safety

**23 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST**

6. Implementation of Phase 4 expansion programme -Royal Liberty Secondary school expansion - Virement.

Councillor Jason Frost, Pecuniary, Councillor Frost has recently been invited to be a Governor at Royal Liberty Secondary School. Councillor Frost left the meeting and did not participate in the debate or vote.

**24 CORPORATE PERFORMANCE REPORT - QUARTER 2**

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Damian White introduced the Quarter 2 Corporate Performance Report to Cabinet. The report was summarised by Sandy Hamberger, Interim Assistant Director of Policy, Performance and Community.

It was noted that for Quarter 2, of those Performance Indicators that had been rag rated, 24 (74%) have a green "on track" status, 3, 5% have an amber status and 6, 17% have a red "off track" status. The proportions of indicators that are green have improved for the second successive quarter.

It was considered good practice for the report to come to Cabinet on a quarterly basis even though the performance indicators for each directorate were taken to the Overview and Scrutiny Sub Committee meetings. It ensures transparency and allows Cabinet to have an overview on how things are going. Scrutiny however, is a different function and takes place within the various Scrutiny Committees in work plans and meetings. This process allows for a public and more specific analysis of performance. Each Overview and Scrutiny Sub Committee should be actively involved in thorough examination of the indicators and Chairs of the various Committees will be encouraged to do this through the Committee work plans.

**Cabinet:**

- **Reviewed** the performance set out in **Appendix 1** and the corrective action that is being taken.
- **Noted** the content of the Demand Pressures Dashboard attached as **Appendix 2**

**25 KEEPING HAVERING MOVING - THE PARKING STRATEGY AND HIGHWAYS RESURFACING POLICY**

Councillor Osman Dervish, Cabinet Member for Environment presented the report to Cabinet for decision.

Everyone in Havering is affected by the way the traffic, highways and parking in the Borough are maintained and delivered. It is imperative for everyone to have arrangements in place for a well-managed highways system and appropriate arrangements for parking. It impacts on families, businesses and the community as a whole. Residents and visitors should be able to move around the Borough efficiently and affordably and this has been demonstrated in feedback from the recent IPSOS Mori Survey of residents, which highlights local highways and parking as being of concern.

The report under consideration details a Parking Strategy and a Highways Resurfacing Policy which is designed to shape services and help to keep Havering moving in the future.

The pace of regeneration and the pending completion of Crossrail make it even more imperative for parking and well maintained infrastructure to be an essential priority.

There are many challenges in dealing with the pace of new development and to this end the Parking Strategy before Cabinet is a very broad document. It reflects the links between parking and transport, environmental, economic, health and planning issues. The Strategy is written to complement other strategic policies such as the Local Plan and the Air Quality Action Plan as well as the Mayor of London Strategies such as the London Plan. It takes into account what is happening in other parts of London and Essex and recognises that consistency can be helpful but

also takes account of the fact that strategies elsewhere may not be the best for Havering.

The Strategy is also mindful of the level of car ownership in Havering which is among the highest in England. Over 75% of households in Havering have at least one car.

Cllr Dervish went on to outline the Highways Resurfacing Policy to Cabinet. Maintaining the Highways in Havering is challenging and expensive but Havering have a statutory duty to do so. With a restricted budget for this work it is crucial that funding is spent in the most effective way possible to get the maximum benefit for the highways network. The Policy set out in Appendix B of the report sets out the objectives by which locations for any available resurfacing investment will be determined to enable the Borough to tackle the roads and footways most in need.

Horizons is a web based mapping application allowing users to visualise, manage and optimise asset management strategies. The software identifies and prioritises highway maintenance schemes and determines the cost implications of various treatments. The “worst first approach” methodology has been applied within Horizon for determining which roads and pavements are to be repaired. Additional inputs can also be used to give priority and weighting to various other factors should the council wish to in the future. It is intended to use the Policy in its current state for a period of three years. It would then be reviewed and updated if appropriate.

This year a full set of road surveys has been completed. This has previously been done on a three year rolling programme and it is believed that this will increase confidence in the “worst first approach”.

Councillor Barrett highlighted some issues and indicated that the Environment Scrutiny Sub Committee should have a full role in scrutinising the consistency of approaches:

- Havering is different to other authorities yet benchmarking has been mentioned.
- Controlled Parking Zones need to be considered in the light of financial implications.
- Consideration must be given to whether the system is fair

Dipti Patel, Assistant Director of the Environment indicated that the Road Surfacing Policy had been through the Scrutiny Committee but the Parking Strategy had not. The documents are high level and further detail will ensue.

Further work is needed and an Action Plan would assist. Input from all Councillors is welcomed. However, work needs to be done without delay. Residents are clear that road surfacing work and parking issues should be dealt with as soon as possible. Roads can deteriorate very quickly especially in bad weather and so it is important that there is continual review of the condition of the roads in the Borough.

Additionally, the Parking Strategy must work for all. Councillor Martin Goode stated that it is essential the Council acts to assist and support small businesses in the Parking Strategy.

**Cabinet:**

- **Agreed** the Parking Strategy at Appendix A of the report;
- **Agreed** the Highways Resurfacing Policy at Appendix B of the report;
- **Delegated** to the Director of Neighbourhoods in consultation with the Lead Member for Environment authority to take all necessary steps to enable and complete the strategy documents including minor revisions to the Parking Strategy and the Highways Resurfacing Policy and the future introduction of the service Parking Operation Plan.

**26 IMPLEMENTATION OF PHASE 4 EXPANSION PROGRAMME -ROYAL LIBERTY SECONDARY SCHOOL EXPANSION - VIREMENT**

Councillor Robert Benham, Cabinet Member for Education, Children and Families presented the report to Cabinet. In October 2016, Cabinet approved the inclusion of the Royal Liberty School to the Phase 4 School Expansions Programme. The proposed expansion was to increase capacity from a four form of entry school to a five form of entry school proposed from 1<sup>st</sup> September, 2018 to meet the growing demand for secondary school places in the Borough.

The Local Authority undertook the non-statutory consultation following Cabinet approval and the decision was taken to expand the school on 29<sup>th</sup> August, 2017, subject to the school submitting a business case to the Department for Education (DfE), as the school is an academy.

The business case was approved. The Cabinet report detailed an estimate at that time of £4 million for the associated building works to enable the school to accommodate the additional pupils. The estimate was based on a feasibility assessment carried out by council departments and external stakeholders.

As the school was included in the DfE Priority School Building Programme it was agreed that the DfE should incorporate the building works associated with the expansion as part of the wider condition works to minimise disruption to the school and maximise the tendering opportunities.

Following the initial feasibility, further work was undertaken including significant dialogue with local Planners and other interested parties including English Heritage due to the fact that the existing building was listed.



The further work led to changes being required to the originally planned project and this had the effect of increasing the programme budget. In particular the shape of the sports hall building had to be changed. Building and cladding requirements had to be put in place and tree protection measures implemented. There were further inflationary increases due to the extended tendering procedures.

The project costs now total £5.2 million which do not reflect good value for money when compared to other Havering Projects, although it should be noted that Havering has provided excellent value for money in respect of other matters and has recently been commended by the DfE.

However, it was not feasible to abort the project given the significant amount of money already invested and whilst the increase is unfortunate, the costs are affordable within the Basic Needs Grant that Havering receives from the DfE. There would be no impact on council funds.

Cllr Benham stated that he and the Leader had requested a review as to how the budget gap occurred and this is underway to ensure lessons can be learned and factored into any future project.

**Cabinet:**

- **Agreed** to vire funding of £1.2m from the DfE Basic Need Capital Grant - Phase 4 School Expansions contingency budget to the Royal Liberty expansion.
- **Agreed** to release funding to the ESFA (Education and Skills Funding Agency) to proceed with expansion build works.
- **Agreed** to review the feasibility process to ensure more accurate forecasting of costs.

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**Chairman**

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## CABINET

### Subject Heading:

Business Rates  
Discretionary Revaluation Support  
Scheme

### Cabinet Member:

Cllr Ramsey

### SLT Lead:

Sarah Bryant

### Report Author and contact details:

Dave Gibbs 020 3373 0675

[Dave.gibbs@onesource.co.uk](mailto:Dave.gibbs@onesource.co.uk)

### Policy context:

Business Rates Revaluation Relief –  
Discretionary Requirement

The Scheme is fully funded by Central Government. The London Borough of Havering's allocation for the 4 year period is £1.696m, of which £1.470m was designated to the first two years (2017/2018 & 2018/2019). For years 3 & 4 the Councils allocation reduces to £226,000. Central Government provided £12,000 to support the administration of the scheme which contributed towards the admin costs and software development costs required to administer the scheme

### Financial summary:

### Is this a Key Decision?

Significant effect on two or more Wards

### When should this matter be reviewed?

N/a

### Reviewing OSC:

N/a

## The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives

Communities making Havering  
Places making Havering

(X)

(X)

Opportunities making Havering  
Connections making Havering

[]  
[]

***Place an X in the [] as appropriate***

## **SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This Report sets out the Council's proposals for administering the remaining two years of the Governments Revaluation Support Scheme (RSS) for the financial years 2019/2020, and 2020/2021 and the principles of the scheme for the remaining period up until 2020/2021.
- 1.2 In the Budget statement on 8 March 2017, the Chancellor announced that the Government would provide £300m to support those business most adversely affected by the recent revaluation of commercial properties. The funding was provided over a period 4 years.
- 1.3 The Revaluation Support Scheme adopted in 2017 is in addition to the changes announced in the budget on 29<sup>th</sup> October 2018, which is providing further support to businesses from April 2019.
- 1.4 Local Authorities were able to use their current powers with regards to Discretionary Business Rate Relief under Section 47 of the Local Government Act 1988 to develop and administer this new relief.
- 1.5 The Government did not prescribe how this relief was to be applied as they considered that Local Authorities were best placed to design their own relief schemes to determine eligibility and how best to distribute this support.
- 1.6 Havering received Government funding of £1.696m as profiled in the table below. The funding for 2017/2018 & 2018/2019 which had to be applied in year, has been fully allocated to the eligible properties in accordance with the scheme approved by Cabinet on 9 August 2017.

<b>Year</b>	<b>2017/18 £m</b>	<b>2018/19 £m</b>	<b>2019/20 £m</b>	<b>2020/21 £m</b>	<b>Total Funding £m</b>
<b>Value of funding</b>	<b>£0.989</b>	<b>£0.481</b>	<b>£0.198</b>	<b>£0.028</b>	<b>£1.696</b>

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Cabinet is asked to approve the continuation of the Governments Discretionary Revaluation Support for the remaining two years of the relief as set out in the Report Detail, and previously agreed by Cabinet in August 2017.

## **REPORT DETAIL**

- 2.1 It is proposed that the scheme uses the remaining two year funding allocation to apply an equal allocation to all accounts which:
- have a Rateable Value (RV) of between £15,000 and £50,999
  - have incurred an increase of 2% or more in business rates compared to 2016/17
  - are occupied
  - are not in receipt of any Mandatory or Discretionary Rate Relief.
- 2.2 By limiting the Rateable Value thresholds to £15,000 to £50,999, this seeks to continue to provide the maximum support to smaller businesses which were adversely affected by the 2017 revaluation.
- 2.3 Qualifying properties with a Rateable Value below £12,000 will already receive 100% relief under the separate Small Business Rates Relief Scheme, assuming they occupy one property or other properties with a value below £2,899 or a total aggregate value of £27,999.
- 2.4 Under the same Small Business Rates Relief Scheme, businesses with a Rateable Value between £12,000 and £15,000 will receive tapered relief i.e. a property with a Rateable Value of £13,500, will receive 50% relief, and a property with Rateable Value of £14,000 will receive a 33% reduction in their rates charge.
- 2.5 In the remaining two years the local Discretionary Business Rate Revaluation Support Scheme will apply from 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2021. Under the scheme, relief will only be provided where a qualifying ratepayer's bill has increased due to the 2017 revaluation by more than 2%. The total assistance the Council is able to offer under the scheme will be limited to the central government funding provided for the final two years totaling £226,000.
- 2.6 An analysis of the tax base has been undertaken, and it has been established that there are 987 properties within the Rateable Value range of £15,000 to £50,999.
- 2.7 It is proposed that for 2019/2020 relief of £200.61 be provided to 987 small businesses. The scheme seeks to apply the same criteria as for the first two years of the scheme which was agreed at Cabinet in August 2017. The Scheme, excludes Government Buildings, Advertising Rights, Amusement Arcades, Communication Masts etc. The scheme also excluded betting shops and pay day lenders.
- 2.8 Properties which were not on the rating list at 1 April 2017, will not be eligible for the relief. This is because those ratepayers, would not have experienced the impact of an increased business rates charge, following the 2017 Revaluation. Ratepayers who have arrears due from 2016/17 or earlier and are not paid by 01/09/17 or by arrangement with the Council, will not qualify.
- 2.9 Where a qualifying ratepayer's 2017/18 and/ or 2016/17 rates bill is reduced for any reason, the amount of their relief will be reduced or removed accordingly.

- 2.10 Due to state aid implications, relief will need to be awarded individually on a case by case basis and administered via an application form. Should a continuation of the scheme be approved, the Councils business rates team, will proactively contact those businesses that are eligible to receive the relief, so that the support scheme is fully maximised. The business rates section, will also visit properties where applications have not been received, as well as using SMS messaging and outbound calling to ensure high levels of take up.
- 2.11 The scheme and levels of funding allocation will be kept under review, and will seek to make adjustments to ensure any unspent funding is allocated. In the first years of the scheme the full Government funding allocation was been used to help small businesses and it is the intention to utilise the full relief in the remaining 2 years.

LBH			
		2019-20	2020-21
Amount of funding		£198,000.00	£28,000.00
No. of accounts on full list	6077		
No. of accounts on full list & occupied	5667		
No of accounts on full list, occupied & RV between 15,000 & 50,999	1476	£134.15	£18.97
No of accounts on full list, occupied, RV between 15,000 & 50,999 & no MRR or DRR	1398	£141.63	£20.03
No of accounts on full list, occupied, RV between 15,000 & 50,999 & no MRR or DRR & Increase in Bill @ 1/4/17	1391	£142.34	£20.13
No of accounts on full list, occupied, RV between 15,000 & 50,999 & no MRR or DRR & currently eligible	987	£200.61	£28.37

## REASONS AND OPTIONS

### Reasons for the decision:

- 3.1 The Council are required by central government to fully implement the Discretionary Revaluation Support Scheme. The Council do not have the ability to abstain from the implementation of the scheme.

### Other options considered:

- 3.2 The report proposes a continuation of the Governments Revaluation Support Scheme as agreed at Cabinet on 9 August 2017. The proposal is in-line with the Governments criteria to help small businesses.

## IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

- 4.1 The funding that was awarded to The London Borough of Havering up until 2020/21 is as set out in the summary report. This funding will be used to award

relief in accordance with the proposed scheme up to the total value of grant awarded, i.e. £1.696m. The profile of the funding over the business rates beneficiary organisations is as below, assuming we give relief up to the funding cap.

	Share	17/18 £m	18/19 £m	19/20£m	20/21£m	Total £m
LBH Council Tax	64%	0.633	0.308	0.127	0.018	1.085
GLA share	36%	0.356	0.173	0.071	0.010	0.611
		<b>0.989</b>	<b>0.481</b>	<b>0.198</b>	<b>0.028</b>	<b>1.696</b>

- 4.2 The Scheme will therefore be fully funded by Central Government. The share for Havering and the GLA (67%) will be paid to the council via s31 grant and the balance being met by government through the central share. It is understood that as part of the end of year NNDR3 return process there will be a reconciliation based on actual reliefs granted and the allocations of s31 grant to Havering and the GLA will be adjusted. Officers will work to ensure the use of grant is maximised within any funding conditions that may apply.
- 4.3 In introducing the four year scheme Government awarded Havering £12,000 in 'new burdens' funding in order to administer its implementation. There has been no subsequent additional funding provided.

#### **Legal implications and risks:**

- 5.1 The Government have stated in a letter to Local Authorities dated 20 June 2017.
- 5.2 "Billing authorities are expected to deliver the scheme through the use of their discretionary relief powers under section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988, as amended. Billing authorities will be compensated through a Section 31 grant for the cost to the authority of granting the relief – up to a maximum amount based on the authority's allocation of the £300m fund. The grants will be made quarterly in arrears for the duration of the scheme.
- 5.3 We expect billing authorities to have communicated with ratepayers on the confirmed terms of the new schemes for relief covered by the BRIL (2/2017) and this BRIL (4/2017), including anticipated timescale for rebilling where necessary."
- 5.4 As an exercise of discretion the Authority must act reasonably. It is understood that there have been no complaints during the operation of the scheme to date and it has been utilised to the maximum.
- 5.5 Whenever the Authority is exercising functions it must comply with the public sector equality duty in s 149 Equality Act 2010 and therefore assess the impact of the proposed scheme as follows:

*(1) A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to—*

*(a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;*



*(b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;*  
*(c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.*

**Human Resources implications and risks:**  
**N/a**

**Equalities implications and risks:**

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires the Council, when exercising its functions, to have due regard to:

The need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;

The need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share protected characteristics and those who do not, and; foster good relations between those who have protected characteristics and those who do not.

Note: 'Protected characteristics' are: age, sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnerships, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment.

The Council is committed to all of the above in the provision, procurement and commissioning of its services, and the employment of its workforce. In addition, the Council is also committed to improving the quality of life and wellbeing for all Havering residents in respect of socio-economics and health determinants.

In consultation with the Corporate Diversity Advisor, it has been determined that an Equality Impact Assessment is not required at this time as the scheme is aimed at helping smaller businesses. In respect of the Equality Duty, there is no potential within the scheme for a detrimental or negative impact on 'protected' groups or individuals. The scheme will be kept under review as it is implemented.

<b>BACKGROUND PAPERS</b>
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None

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## CABINET

### Subject Heading:

Bid to the Greater London Authority for a funding programme under the Homebuilding Capacity Fund

### Cabinet Member:

Councillor Damian White, Leader of the Council

### SLT Lead:

Neil Stubbings – Director of Regeneration Programmes

### Report Author and contact details:

Kevin Hazlewood Assistant Director of Development  
Kevin.hazlewood@havering.gov.uk:

### Policy context:

Havering Housing Strategy 2014-2017

HRA Business Plan 2017-2047

National Planning Policy Framework 2012

Draft London Plan 2017

Havering Local Development Framework and Romford Area Action Plan 2008

Romford Development Framework 2015

Emerging Havering Local Plan 2017

### Financial summary:

Additional revenue support designed for Councils to deliver new approaches to increasing housing delivery, by building capacity and developing skills and expertise.

### Is this a Key Decision?

Yes

Expenditure or saving (including anticipated income) of £500,000 or more

### When should this matter be reviewed?

Not applicable

### Reviewing OSC:

Towns and Communities OSC

**The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives**

Communities making Havering	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Places making Havering	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Opportunities making Havering	<input type="checkbox"/>
Connections making Havering	<input type="checkbox"/>

## **SUMMARY**

- 1.1 The report is seeking approval to enable the Council to submit a bid to obtain grant funding under the Greater London Authority (GLA) Homebuilding Capacity Fund. The scheme is to develop capacity, skills and expertise to develop new affordable housing. The approval to progress any or initiatives and commit Council funding will be sought separately in accordance with the Councils constitution. The deadline for bid submission is 25 January 2019.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- That cabinet **APPROVE** the submission of a bid of £940,000 as set out in this report to the GLA for the Homebuilding Capacity Fund.

## **REPORT DETAIL**

- 2.1 The Mayor is making up to £10 million of revenue funding available for councils to deliver new approaches to increasing housing delivery, by building capacity and developing skills and expertise. The draft London Plan sets a target of 65,000 new homes per year in London over the next 10 years. In recognition that council budgets for planning and development are under pressure, this new fund is designed to support councils to increase housing supply, both in their role as Local Planning Authorities and as homebuilders.
- 2.2 The Homebuilding Capacity Fund offers councils the opportunity to bid for revenue funding for 2019/20 and 2020/21 to build skills and capacity across their housing and planning teams. The objectives of the programme are to:
- develop a sustainable increase in the capacity and skills of both housing and planning departments within councils;
  - promote the Mayor's good growth principles in housing delivery across London;
  - maximise the level of social rented and other genuinely affordable homes being built;
  - diversify the range of homebuilders, housing development models and housing sites in London; and
  - support the delivery of housing targets set out in the draft London Plan, the London Housing Strategy and the Mayor's council housing programme, Building Council Homes for Londoners.

2.3 The Homebuilding Capacity Fund complements existing capital funding programmes including the Affordable Homes Programme 2016-21 and Building Council Homes for Londoners, by offering councils the chance to bid for funding to access expertise, obtain skills and/or undertake work to support an increase in housing supply. It is intended to support proposals that councils are unable to resource through alternative means. It is also designed to enable councils to start gearing up to implementing the draft London Plan in advance of its adoption.

2.4 The Mayor published his Homebuilding Capacity Fund prospectus for the programme in October 2018. The prospectus sets out the 4 key areas where councils can bid for support. These are:

- delivering a new generation of council homes
- increasing housing supply by supporting the development of small sites
- proactive planning in areas with significant growth potential
- ensuring optimal density of new residential developments

2.5 Guidance from the GLA has identified the maximum grant available for a single local authority is set at £750,000. The proposed bid of £940,000 is for the resources and outcomes identified in the table below. There is an expectation from the GLA some funding from the bidding local authority would be identified. The additional £190,000 over the maximum bid level is the proposed contribution from the Council, the difference between the grant received and the costs of the staff will be met from existing service budgets.

	Current Estimates (additional funding will be subject to further approvals) – 2 years
Increasing skills and capacity within the Urban Design service to support and guide key projects relating to unlocking small site development and development/enhancement of key town centres.	£240,000 3 x posts to produce a design quality guide and produce Special Planning Guides associated with regeneration and development.
Increasing skills and capacity in land referencing and acquisition to support bringing forward brownfield and mixed retail/commercial/residential developments.	£200,000 2 x posts land and development advisors to unlock site potential across Councils land holdings to support and increase Local Plan proposed housing numbers.
Developing skills in house to delivery outline feasibility and capacity studies of potential development localities.	£100,000 1x post for architectural and space planning to produce capacity studies in house. This will bring this function and planning compliance sooner into projects.
Increasing skills and capacity within project management functions to ensure delivery of new initiatives especially associated with small sites and key town centres.	£400,000 3 x posts for senior project managers to deliver the small sites programme, town centre reviews, locality master plans and the projects associated with the Thames Estuary.

	£940,000
Gap to potential grant available.	-£190,000

## **REASONS AND OPTIONS**

### **Reasons for the decision:**

- 3.1 The funding is revenue funding for additional staff for a period of 2 years. These staff will have the levels of skills and experience needed to deliver good quality affordable housing and enhanced place shaping. This will also build expertise and skills for a lasting improvement in delivery. The approval to progress schemes and commit Council funding will be sought separately in accordance with the Councils constitution.

### **Other options considered:**

- 3.2 Other options considered and rejected are:
- a) Not to Bid – **REJECTED** as this would mean the Council would not be able to benefit from the programme to support the delivery of local housing priorities and regeneration activities

## **IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS**

### **Financial implications and risks:**

- 4.1 The Homebuilding Capacity Fund offers councils the opportunity to bid for revenue funding for 2019/20 and 2020/21 up to a maximum of £750,000. The grant is specifically to build skills and capacity across the housing and planning teams. This report has identified that required resources will cost £940,000. The difference between the grant received and the costs of the staff will be met from existing service budgets.
- 4.2 The submission of the proposed bid does not specifically create a financial commitment for the Council. However, in the event the schemes are not progressed, any secured funding would have to be returned to the GLA, exposing the Council to reputational risk.

### **Legal implications and risks:**

- 5.1 The Council is the local housing authority and has a statutory duty under Section 8 of the Housing Act 1985 to consider housing conditions in its district and the needs of the district with respect to the provision of further housing accommodation. These duties can be coupled with the Council's general power of

competence under Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011, which gives the power to do anything an individual can do, subject to any statutory constraints on the Council's powers. The recommendations in this report are in keeping with this power.

- 5.2 Should the bid be successful, a further report will be submitted seeking approval to enter into the funding agreement(s) and that report will outline any further legal implications.

**Human Resources implications and risks:**

- 6.1 There are no specific HR implications or risks on the question of submitting a bid under this programme.

**Equalities implications and risks:**

- 7.1 There are no specific equalities or social inclusion implications or risks on the question of submitting a bid under this programme.

<b>BACKGROUND PAPERS</b>
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None



## CABINET

### Subject Heading:

Adopt London East Cabinet Report

### Cabinet Member:

Councillor Robert Benham (Lead member)

### SLT Lead:

Tim Aldridge, Director of Children's Services.

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### Report Author and contact details:

Robert South, Assistant Director Children's Social.

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### Policy context:

A legislative framework for the regionalisation of adoption services came into existence on the 16 March 2016 through the Education and Adoption Act 2016

### Financial summary:

Havering's overall financial contribution is: £361,018 in year 1, reducing to £313,929 from year 2 onwards.

### Is this a Key Decision?

A key decision is required as there will be a significant impact on two or more wards in the Borough.

### When should this matter be reviewed?

12<sup>th</sup> of December

### Reviewing OSC:

Children and Learning

**The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives**

Communities making		
Havering	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Places making		
Havering		<input type="checkbox"/>
Opportunities making		
Havering	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Connections making		
Havering	<input type="checkbox"/>	

<b>SUMMARY</b>
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The purpose of the report is to propose a model for the future delivery of East London's Regional Adoption Agency.

It is proposed that the East London Regional Adoption Agency (RAA) is created through combining the adoption services for the four East London Boroughs of Havering, Tower Hamlets, Newham and Barking and Dagenham. These agencies wish to build on the success of their existing services to improve performance in meeting the needs of children who require permanence through adoption, by bringing together the best practice from each authority within the RAA. This proposal forms part of an overarching project to develop four RAAs across London. Each of the four RAA's will have a host/lead authority. Havering will be the lead authority for East London. All local authorities in England are statutorily required to join a regional adoption agency by April 2020.

Following the recent news regarding Waltham Forest's cabinet decision to join 'Ambitious for Adoption' an alternative Regional Adoption Agency, this report recommends a four local authority model. The remaining four local authorities are committed to establishing the model proposed in this report and full business case. The table below sets out the timescales for cabinet sign off in each of the constituent local authorities.

LA	Cabinet sign off
Havering	January 2019
Tower Hamlets	January 2019
LBBD	February 2019
Newham	March 2019

In Havering, the average annual spend for adoption services over the last three years (plus a projected spend 2017/18) was £340,929.00 this includes £27k (net) that was spent on inter-agency fees – the cost of placing a Havering child with an adopter approved outside of the adoption agency.

Under the proposed formation of an East London RAA a contribution of £313,929 is required to fund future costs within the RAA.

Inter-agency fees will remain the responsibility of each Local Authority and will not form part of the budget for the RAA – a budget will be retained to cover inter-agency fees within each constituent Local Authority including Havering.

Each member of the RAA will need to provide a one-off contribution to the set-up costs of the RAA – these are costs that are not currently covered by individual adoption budgets including the Head of Service for the RAA, and the centralised business support function. The Havering contribution will be a one-off payment of £47,089, with the other three Local Authorities also making one-off contributions. As the host authority, Havering will receive an income of circa £200k in the first year to cover the cost of transition, a new head of service and hosting costs.

The business case to support this model enables each Local Authority partner to reduce the amount it spends on inter-agency fees, as the RAA recruits more of its own adopters, and places more of its children with its adopters. Alongside this reduction in expenditure, the model also projects an income that will be derived from other Local Authorities placing their children with East London Adopt carers, thus attracting a fee income to the RAA. This projected income will allow the transition costs to be tapered off to £0 in year 2 of the RAA going live. The combined effect of an inter-agency fee income (which will be retained by the East London Adopt RAA), and the reduction of inter-agency expenditure (the costs of which will be allocated proportionately, and budgetary responsibility retained by each of the constituent Local Authorities) enables the model to project a reduced overall cost of delivering adoption services over the next three years (see table below).

The table below sets out the proposed savings to Havering's adoption spend in the first three years of the model. These are based on reducing interagency costs in line with targets set out in the performance section of this report and full business case.

<b>Haverin g</b>	<b>RAA Fund ing  £</b>	<b>Transitio nal Payment  £</b>	<b>Assume d Efficienc ies  £</b>	<b>Inter agenc y Fees £</b>	<b>Inter agency Income  £</b>	<b>Inter agency Total £</b>	<b>Total adoption spend  £</b>	<b>% reducti on in spend</b>
RAA Budget 16/17	313,929			138,974	(155,461)	(16,487)	297,442	
RAA Budget 17/18	313,929			162,212	(136,433)	25,779	339,708	
RAA Budget 18/19	313,929			93,000*	(128,567)*	(35,567)*	278,362*	
RAA Budget 19/20	313,929	47,089		31,000	(128,567)	(97,567)	263,451	5%
RAA Budget 20/21	313,929	47,089	(47,089)	0	(128,567)	(128,567)	185,362	33%
RAA Budget 21/22	313,929	47,089	(47,089)	0	(128,567)	(128,567)	185,362	33%

\* This is the current forecast for both interagency fees paid and income for 2018/19.

The Income and Expenditure model is based on the following assumptions:

- Interagency Expenditure - where budgetary responsibility will be retained by each LA
- Interagency Income – this is expected to accrue from 2 income streams
  - I. The element of Interagency income derived from each LA's current investment in adopters – for Havering this is currently projected at approximately £128k per annum
  - II. Interagency Income due to the Region from investment from the pool arrangements, to be retained by the East London RAA to:
    - Offset the additional transition / set up costs;
    - Fund new developments within the RAA
    - Supplement the RAA funding each year that the RAA hits its performance targets. The RAA funding commitment will reduce in line with the reduction in interagency fees brought about by improved performance.

### **Benefits of regionalisation in East London**

Adoption services across all East London agencies are small and Individual Local Authorities struggle to provide the full range of adoption services. Detailed evaluation of adoption services has identified a number of challenges (see table below) all of which will benefit from a regional approach within East London.

The performance section of this report details target performance improvements in years 1 to 3. These have been developed using a cautious model of service delivery working towards best practice models.

The East London Adoption services already work together through the ELPAC consortium in order to ameliorate some of these challenges. Working in cooperation has provided many benefits and these existing working relationships will be built upon to ensure a smooth transition into one organisation

<b>Challenge</b>	<b>Regional solution</b>	<b>Benefits</b>
Against a background of intensive challenge from the voluntary sector adopter recruitment has not been maximised	Working in partnership with the Pan London Adopt London brand brings a dedicated service communications budget a large single brand and an ability to develop both London wide and East London specific campaigns	Improved adopter base for child matches maintaining their connection to the local area  Savings against the Inter-agency fee budget
Some delays in assessment due to worker availability	One recruitment and assessment team will undertake all assessments, work will be allocated more effectively. Should demand for assessments increase	Increased number of adopters  Adopters do not apply elsewhere

	Independent social workers may be used	Savings as above
Numbers of children with a placement order for adoption are relatively low across East London.	An East London regional adoption agency will provide a forum for effective working relationship with the East London courts	Increased number of children benefit from the stability offered through adoption  In LA savings against the LAC budget
Some matches of harder to place children take longer than they should	A single family finding team working across East London and beyond will pool resources to work more effectively. Local relationships with children's social workers will be maintained through maintenance of a partial base in each Local Authority	Children benefit from the stability offered through adoption at the earliest opportunity  In LA savings against the budget
The adoption support offer is underdeveloped. A small local adoption support service is unable to provide the range of services needed.	A single adoption support service will pool all resources and enable the service to develop a clear core offer to all adopters and maximise usage of the Adoption Support Fund	Adoptive families benefit from improved support. Outcomes improve  Placement disruptions decline
Regional partnerships are under developed	A single agency operating in a coterminous region to key partner agencies will engage with agencies in development of innovative partnership working, clear referral pathways and co-working relationships	Adoptive families benefit from a clear shared offer  Children are better supported in education and health services  Maximisation of the partnership offer will impact positively on budgets
Courts delay and often block the progress of the adoption process	A single agency, operating under a single head of service, led by a partnership of local authorities will be far better placed to influence court decision making processes	Speedier processes and improved performance  Enhanced regional reputation

No joined up commissioning	A single commissioning framework and quality assurance process across the region and potentially across London	Commissioned services are better aligned to the needs of children and young people Value for money and reduced overall spend on commissioned contracts
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Furthermore, becoming a member of one of the 4 local authority hosted models that make up the wider pan-London model will only serve to enhance all of the benefits listed above through collaborative working across.

Havering also intends to cultivate and build on existing partnerships and build new regional arrangements where possible to realise further benefits in its adoption services. For example, the ongoing relationships with Southend Borough Council and Essex as a region.

## **Financial Summary**

### **East London RAA- Future Finance and Performance Overview - Havering**

#### **1) Overview of costs**

- Havering will contribute **£313,929 per annum**
- There will also be a transitional payment of **£47,089 in year 1** to cover the extra costs (A new regional head of service and increased hosting costs) of the regional model, although this is currently projected to occur annually in the above table, the expectation is for this cost to be managed down as a result of improved working arrangements and efficiencies from co-location.
- Interagency budgets will not come into the model but the RAA will maintain a system of distributing costs equitably among the constituent LA's.

#### **2) Principles**

- The establishment of the new RAA is about improved performance across the region and the business case sets out an invest to save model. The extra transitional costs will be offset due to both a) the reduction in inter-agency placements (and corresponding fees, retained by constituent Local Authorities), and b) the retention of inter-agency placement income by the East London Adopt RAA. The business case projects that this should allow the transitional fee to be reduced to a nil contribution for all Local Authorities by year two of the RAA going live.

In addition to this, the financial model predicts savings of circa £45k per year from year 2 onwards.

### **Headline Risks**

The table below sets out the key risks and mitigating actions associated with the formation of the East London RAA.

<b><u>Risk</u></b>	<b><u>Explanation</u></b>	<b><u>Mitigation(s) / Principle(s)</u></b>
Redundancy costs	There is a risk that all redundancy costs (post-implementation) fall to the host authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The RAA partnerships agree that all future redundancy costs are spilt equitably among the constituent local authorities</li><li>• Any redundancy costs (pre-implementation) remain with the originating local authority</li></ul>
Current assets (adopters)	Each local authority will join an RAA with a pool of adopters recruited by that local authority. There is a risk that the income generated by those adopters becomes RAA income and is therefore being apportioned equally among the constituent local authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Any income generated through assets (adopters) brought into the model will be able to be drawn down by the local authority that recruited them</li><li>• Beyond implementation (or the date that joint recruitment commences) all adopters will be considered RAA assets. The income generated from these adopters will remain with the RAA and discussed by the partnership as to how the money is best used / apportioned</li></ul>
Paying Interagency fees	There is a risk that the RAA spend on interagency fees is apportioned equally across all local authorities. There could be a situation where a high % of the children come from a single borough but the costs are split equally.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The RAA's will operate a sliding scale formula for how interagency costs are apportioned.</li><li>• It will take into account the originating borough of the child</li><li>• It will also take into account the previous year's spend on interagency placements</li><li>• The partnership agreements will work these formulae up in consultation with local project boards and the executive</li></ul>
Unpredictable demand	Performance suggests that adoption demand is unpredictable.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The RAA will have tolerances for capacity across the region and for each local authority based on</li></ul>



	<p>There is a risk that the current funding may not be enough if there is a spike in demand</p>	<p>a target unit cost per child placed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The partnership agreements will agree the process for how extra funding can be drawn down to cope with rising demand</li><li>• Should the RAA's meet their performance targets, the associated savings could be used as a buffer</li><li>• Income generated from RAA adopters could also be used as a buffer</li><li>• While budgets have been set for the first three years, each RAA will operate a yearly budget review and setting exercise to ensure flexibility</li><li>• The RAA's will aim to become demand led organisations by the end of year 3 at which point, future budgets will be based on unit costs and likely future demand</li></ul>
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## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

That Cabinet

- approve the business case at appendix A to this report to proceed with an East London Regional Adoption Agency led by the London Borough of Havering to commence by July 2019 agree the budget commitment set out in the body of this report
- Delegate authority for the implementation of the project to the Director for Children Services including but not limited to entering into partnering agreements, agreeing the final terms of any Inter-authority risk and partnership sharing agreement and agreeing and arranging Tupe of staff between the authorities.

## **REPORT DETAIL**

### **Contextual Background**

In March 2016, the government announced changes to the delivery of adoption services setting a very clear direction that all local authorities' adoption services

must be delivered on a regionalised basis by 2020. The premise of regionalisation is to:

- Increase the number of children adopted
- Reduce the length of time children wait to be adopted
- Improve post-adoption support services to families who have adopted children from care
- Reduce the number of agencies that provide adoption services thereby improving efficiency and effectiveness.

The implementation of the new RAA for East London follows substantial project work from March 2018 where the decision was taken and agreed with the DfE to pursue four separate RAAs in London. It is proposed that Havering Council be appointed as the lead borough for the East London's Regional Adoption Agency which will be known as Adopt London East (ALE). Havering Council has been acting as lead authority in the discussion and planning to date. ALE will build upon the previous positive practice established within the East London consortium – East London Adoption and Permanence Consortium (ELPAC) which is already delivering services effectively across the East region.

### **The Principles**

The principles which this business case has followed were agreed by the Adopt London Executive Board which was delegated by the Association of London Directors of Children's Services (ALDCS) to oversee the development of the four London Regional Adoption Agencies. These principles have been endorsed by the DfE:

1. Local authorities involved in Adopt London and each of the four RAAs are committed to collaborating adoption arrangements so that the best interests of children and their adoptive families are secured and kept at the forefront of decision-making.
2. Adopt London will provide an overarching framework for enabling effective coordination, coherence and partnership working across London.
3. Adopt London authorities, and the four RAAs will make sure that there is consistency of approach in relation to key strategic and operational decisions, e.g. about whether staff are transferred under TUPE arrangements. Project teams in the four RAAs and RAA governance arrangements should reflect the ambition to promote such consistency of approach.
4. There is a commitment to working effectively together with Voluntary Adoption Agencies (VAAs), making sure that their unique and important contribution is maximised and that VAAs are involved in the development of the RAAs and Adopt London.
5. The focus of work over the next 18 months will be on establishing the four RAAs; in phase two, developmental work on the Adopt London hub will progress. We will use the Adopt London Executive Board to operate a virtual Hub in the coming period, with a view to exploring options for joint commissioning across London, maintaining common design principles for the

spokes and exploring opportunities for further development of the Hub in phase 2.

### **Service delivery model, performance targets and budget**

Adopt London East is committed to designing services capable of improving outcomes for children for whom the plan is adoption through:

- Placing more children quicker
- Placing more children in an early permanence placement
- Providing quality support to ensure fewer placement disruptions and happier families
- Improving timescales for adopter assessments
- Assessing adopters well; leading to good and speedy matches

The proposed service delivery model is based on a research evidence base of what works in Adoption and on initial consultation with adopters and key stakeholders.

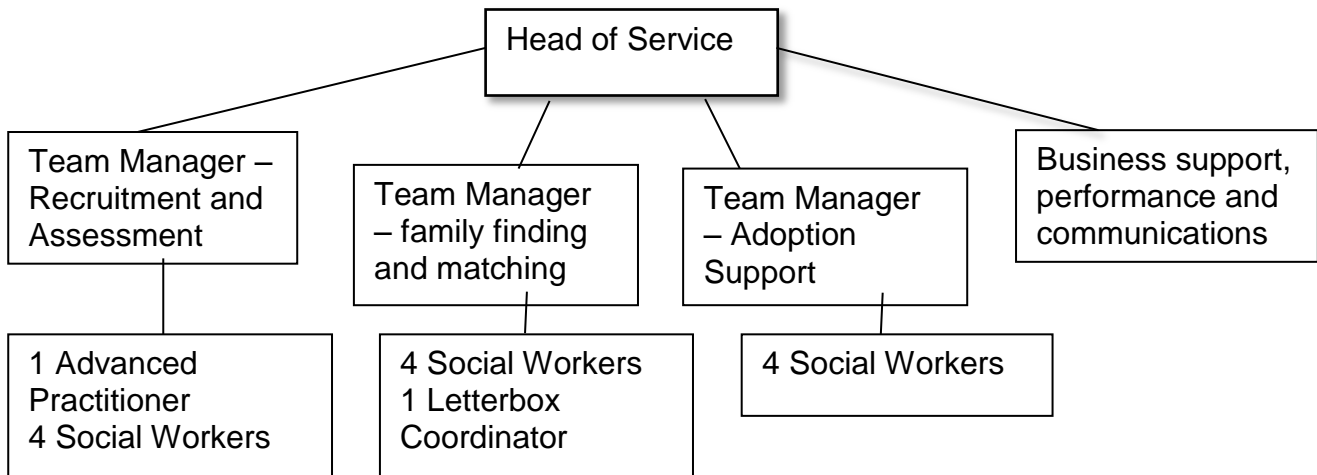
#### **Proposed service delivery model**

The service delivery model includes one head of service and three team managers who manage the three key thematic areas in Adoption; recruitment and assessment; family finding and matching and adoption support.

Team managers will manage teams who will have workers allocated to local areas but operate as a pan East London service. All workers will be expected to operate outside specific Local Authority boundaries according to need and to meet regularly as a team.

Performance expectations and accountabilities of the RAA, Local Authority, each team and each worker must be clear.

This outline structure will be subject to further modelling and may change in some aspects of detail through the next phase of development; thematic operational Task and Finish Groups. These groups will involve first line managers, adoption social workers and adopter representatives in co-production of the working model.



### **RAA performance targets**

A detailed analysis of current performance has been undertaken. This has been reviewed against best practice nationally and in the region. This has informed the setting of SMART performance targets for ALE.

Target	Current	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Improved Outcomes
<b>Adopter Recruitment</b>	29	36	40	45	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Children placed within East London</li><li>- Improved placement choice</li><li>- Improved adopter confidence</li></ul>
<b>Family Finding and Matching</b>	57	60	65	70	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Children placed in East London</li><li>- Increased number of children adopted</li><li>- Improved placement choice</li><li>- Improved matching through placement with adopters known to agency</li></ul>

### **Becoming the host authority**

The proposal is that Havering become the lead authority for the East London Region, hosting the model. There are both a number of benefits and implications associated with becoming the lead. The benefits are listed below and the risk and implications are appended:

#### **Benefits of becoming the host authority**

- As the host authority, 200k has been allocated to fund back office function and this will effectively from an income stream for Havering from RAAs.
- Establishing and developing its' brand both within the region and across London Borough of Havering.

- Leading practice in permanence
- Increased respect across the East London region
- More influence over policy change
- More influence over key decision makers such as the courts

### **Implications**

Appendix B sets out the risks and implications associated with both becoming the host authority and being a constituent member of the RAA. Inter-authority risk and partnership sharing agreement will ensure any risks are mitigated through an agreed process which is signed up to by all local authorities.

### **High level timeline**

The project team are working to a detailed project plan to ensure all necessary processes and pathways are in place prior to go live. Below is a high level visual timeline for the implementation of this project

Adopt London East - Regionalisation Plan										
Month	Sep-18	Oct-18	Nov-18	Dec-18	Jan-19	Feb-19	Mar-19	Apr-19	May-19	Jun-19
Staff engagement event (1)										
Business case signed off by RAA board										
Cabinet meetings & decisions for all councils										
Staff task & finish groups										
Staff engagement event (2)										
Formal consultation with unions and staff										
Recruitment of permanent HoS										
Staff transfer procedure										
RAA go live										

## **REASONS AND OPTIONS**

### **Reasons for the decision**

In March 2016, the government announced changes to the delivery of adoption services setting a very clear direction that all local authorities' adoption services must be delivered on a regionalised basis by 2020. The premise of regionalisation is to:

- Increase the number of children adopted
- Reduce the length of time children wait to be adopted
- Improve post-adoption support services to families who have adopted children from care
- Reduce the number of agencies that provide adoption services thereby improving efficiency and effectiveness.

### **Other options considered**

An options appraisal was undertaken in the initial stages of development of the Pan London model for regionalisation of adoption. This model was subsequently refined into four 'Adopt London' Regional adoption agencies with a central hub providing further opportunities for efficiencies of scale. The detailed modelling benefitted from experience in Yorkshire; an early adopter with a similar model:

The rationale for the pan London approach:

- A Pan London resource for London children and families
- 4 Regional agencies providing responsive services at a local level within a recognisable geographical area
- London boroughs who understand local need and challenges to host each agency
- Ability to recruit adopters to meet identified need within the local area
- Opportunities for further economies of scale through working Pan London
- Opportunities for further funding for innovation through Practice Improvement Funding

In order to further test the proposed model consideration has been given to joining a regional adoption agency with other local providers. The only local provider who may be available for consideration is the Coram led regional adoption agency in partnership with Redbridge and other Local Authorities. We made an informal approach to Coram to establish whether they have the capacity to consider Havering as a partner and source information on the delivery model and associated costs.

The local authority model has now been determined as the preferred option due to the following factors:

- Significant reputational risks of pulling out of the model, as the host authority at such a late stage

- Staff across all local authorities have been involved in the design of the new system for three months and there is a commitment from those staff to make this model work
- The likelihood that the DFE would want to claim back project development funds if the model of delivery were to change now
- Targets for performance improvements in the East London model will achieve better outcomes and larger scale efficiencies

## **IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS**

### **Partnership and risk sharing agreements**

The RAA will be governed by a partnership board made up of a number of key stakeholders. (See full business case for detail and appendix B - **Pan-London RAA Finance and Risk Sharing**)

- The partnership will work to an agreed risk and partnership sharing agreement that will cover all financial, HR and legal implications
- This agreement will be drawn up in consultation with all constituent local authorities and legal colleagues during the set-up phase of the project. Many of the risks are already known and are set out below and in appendix B, at a high level with some commentary relating to likely mitigating actions for a number of possible scenarios.

### **Financial implications and risks**

The primary financial implication for Havering is a requirement to contribute its Adoption staffing resource budget to the partnership, to be mobilised as part of a Regional Adoption Agency (RAA) service for north East London. In addition, as the hosting authority, Havering can expect to receive some contribution to cover any incidental costs from the arrangements.

Further work will be undertaken to evaluate the proposed arrangements highlighted in the outline business case, including fully costing the proposal in determining the extent any benefits (or additional costs) could accrue. As mentioned in the main report, there is an expectation of improved performance and value for money plus the potential for savings over the medium term. There is also an indication that each partner will need to make an additional contribution of approximately £47k in the early years of the arrangement, the extent this will occur will also need to be verified as part of the evaluation. Although each partner will retain their direct provision budget, there is a risk that the shared budgets could be insufficient should demand for the service exceed expectations, this is a risk in itself for the Authority and can be mitigated to some extent by the risk share arrangement.

Any other material risks arising from the detailed financial evaluation will be communicated to the internal stakeholders and partner organisations, and may

require corrective action to support the ongoing viability and success of the partnership. The expectation is for the arrangement to be cost neutral (worst case scenario) for Havering as the hosting authority, especially as a result of the £200k transitional grant available to cover that function.

### **Legal implications and risks**

The report seeks authority to make appropriate arrangements with Havering leading in adoption provision arrangements for four other RAAs which will include transfer of functions and officers to TUPE over to Havering for the delivery of the activity.

The Council's duties in respect of placing children for adoption, assessing and approving adopters and providing adoption support are set out in the Adoption and Children Act 2002 and supported by Adoption Agencies Regulations 2005 (as amended), and associated statutory guidance. The Children and Families Act 2014 introduced changes in relation to adoption, including new provisions regarding fostering for adoption, post adoption contact, and attempts to streamline the adoption recruitment and matching process. Education and Adoption Act 2016 (the "Act") requiring local authorities to join a regional adoption agency came into effect 16 March 2016. s15 of the Act provides the Secretary of State power to direct the transfer of adoption functions of a local authority to another local authority or adoption agency unless entered into voluntarily by local authorities. Local authorities are no longer required to maintain adoption services within their area.

s101 Local Government Act 1972, allows for authorities to arrange for the discharge of their functions by another authority.

Information sharing is permitted through Adoption and Care Planning (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations, March 2018, with amendments of the Family Court Practice Directions and the Disclosure of Adoption Information Regulations 2005 and the Care Planning and Placement (England) Regulations 2010.

Changes in provision of services with arranging a shared model should be considered in accordance with the public sector equalities duty under s149 Equalities Act 2010, which requires the Council when exercising its functions to have 'due regard' to the need to eliminate discrimination (both direct and indirect discrimination), harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited under the Act, and to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a 'protected characteristic' and those who do not share that protected characteristic. The report details a proportionate equality analysis.

Officers will seek to enter into arrangements by agreement between the RAAs and the Council covering budget commitments, indemnities, transfer of functions and terms and conditions of employment including pension arrangements, continuous service and potential redundancies.



## **Human Resources implications and risks**

The HR comments in the business case set out the current position with regard to the applicability of the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 (TUPE). In line with the minimum expectation of the DfE, staffs in scope of this new East London Regional Adoption Agency are expected to transfer into the host borough, Havering Council, under TUPE regulations.

It is envisaged that these proposals will initiate significant changes to the way Adoption services are delivered across the 4 boroughs and ultimately new ways of working.

The TUPE regulations impose limitations on the ability of the new employer and employee to agree a variation to the terms and conditions unless there is a genuine Economic, technical or organisational (ETO) reason:

- There needs to be a valid business reason for the change
- The ETO reason must 'entail changes to the workforce'. This means that changes to workforce numbers or job functions must be the objective of plan
- Changes to location of work are now covered as an ETO reason under TUPE. This means that TUPE-related relocations will not be treated as automatically unfair but should still be treated in line with the normal employment principles in terms of formal consultation.

Therefore, it is likely that as well as informing/consulting as part of the TUPE process, formal consultation will take place with staff and unions on the new structure, location and job descriptions triggering a change management process.

It is recognised that all local authorities are likely to follow a similar change management process. However, a proposed Change Management "Terms of Agreement" has been developed and aims to provide clarity and equity between the boroughs throughout the management of the change process. This agreement has been consulted upon with HR leads across the boroughs and will then be shared with the unions. Both the TUPE and restructuring consultation processes will be managed in line with the ACAS guidelines and will run concurrently.

## **Pensions**

All local authorities, pension's provisions are provided under the Local Government Pensions Scheme. The actuary have confirmed that a bulk transfer is only applicable if 10 or more members are transferring from any one previous organisation.

Each local authority is unlikely to be transferring 10 or more members; therefore, the process for bulk transfers is not applicable. The process that will need to be followed is that of a normal transfer from a previous Local Government Pension Scheme i.e.:

- The members will be admitted to the London Borough of Havering pension scheme and will then be subject to 22% employer contribution rate (the employee rate is dependent upon their salary)

- The pension team will write to the previous authorities requesting transfer estimates, calculated in accordance with actuarial guidance issued by the Secretary of State
- Once the details are received, the pensions team will write to the members, highlighting the 'pros and cons' of transferring and ask them to make their decision.
- If members elect to transfer, the pension team will ask the previous authority to make the payment of the relevant transfer value.
- The transfer value, paid from the pension fund, should be enough to cover previous pension liabilities so there is no need for any budget from individual services for pension costs.

However, if any local authority exceeds the bulk transfer number of 10 members, then the process will need to be reviewed and could impact on timescales and costs. The above process will be factored into the formal consultation period.

### **Havering specific risks**

#### **Redundancy risks after go-live**

There is a clear risk around the potential costs of redundancy falling to Havering (as the lead authority) after staff have been TUPE transferred into the model and onto Havering's terms and conditions. The mitigation for this will be the partnership and risk sharing agreement which will be formulated by the project board prior to go-live. The risk-sharing agreement will state that any costs of redundancy will be shared among the partner organisations, should the model fail.

#### **Risks around not transferring Staff under TUPE**

The DFE / national feedback suggest the following:

- The preferred method for the DFE is TUPE
- The feedback nationally about secondment arrangements is not positive

Members of the HR work stream have considered the DFE and national feedback set out the following points as the rationale for a TUPE process before going live with the new model:

- In reality, secondment is an interim arrangement which delays a true go live process and is not a means of securing a permanent change
- Due to the significant changes to the way Adoption services will be delivered across the 4 boroughs i.e. new ways of working, changes to job profiles and location, under TUPE regulations (ETO reasons) this allows the host borough to consult formally on these issues and make the necessary long term changes to enable the ELA to become a successful integrated agency.
- Long term secondments are likely to have TUPE implications There are a host of management issues that can stem from not having all staff managed

under the same management structure / processes and different working conditions

- Secondment arrangements can inhibit real culture change which is required for a newly configured service. There are potential funding issues if posts become vacant / are taken out during secondment arrangements. It may also create some recruitment and retention issues.
- It is much more difficult to create a new identity under seconded arrangements

**Equalities implications and risks:**

See appendix C

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None

**Appendices:**

***Appendix A – ELRAA full business case***

***Appendix B – Pan-London finance and risk sharing principles***

***Appendix C – EIA and covering letter***

***Appendix D – Benefits of Regionalisation***

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## Adopt London East Regional Adoption Agency



# BUSINESS CASE

Final VERSION 1.0

November 2018

## Project information

Project name	Adopt London East : An East London regionalised adoption service
Project ID	
Project Sponsor	Tim Aldridge
Project Manager	James Boxer

## Document revision history

Date	Version	Summary of changes	Revised by

## Document approval

Date	Version	Approved by	Role of approver

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# 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

It is proposed that a new East London Regional Adoption Agency (RAA) is created through combining the adoption services for the four East London Boroughs of Havering, Tower Hamlets, Newham and Barking and Dagenham. These agencies wish to build on the success of their existing services to improve performance in meeting the needs of children who require permanence through adoption, by bringing together the best practice from each authority within the RAA. This proposal forms part of an overarching project to develop four RAAs across London.

This document describes how establishing a single agency will allow the four authorities to provide a more cohesive, efficient and effective use of resources and development of practice to the benefit of children, adopters and others who gain from adoption services. It proposes that the London Borough of Havering will host the RAA, the cost of development to be funded by the Department for Education. This document also sets out how the RAA will work with its partners to deliver Adoption Services.

In March 2016, the government announced changes to the delivery of adoption services setting a very clear direction that all local authorities' adoption services must be delivered on a regionalised basis by 2020. This followed a range of national policy changes since 2012, including the 2015 'Regionalising Adoption' paper by the DfE that sought improvements in adoption performance. Following the general election in June 2017, the Minister of State for Children and Families reaffirmed commitment to this policy. In March 2018, the DfE commenced the legislation that allows them to direct a local authority into a RAA if there is no progress being made.

The premise of regionalisation is to:

- Increase the number of children adopted
- Reduce the length of time children wait to be adopted
- Improve post-adoption support services to families who have adopted children from care
- Reduce the number of agencies that provide adoption services thereby improving efficiency & effectiveness.

The implementation of the new RAA for East London follows substantial project work from March 2018 where the decision was taken and agreed with the DfE to pursue four separate RAAs in London, not a single RAA as had been discussed through 2016-17. The East London project has the benefit of being able to access previous learning from those RAAs across the country that are already live. Project Managers across London have also worked together to ensure as much consistency pan-London as possible whilst retaining an awareness and consideration of the specific demographics and other issues specific to their region and within their region.

The East London RAA will be known as Adopt London East (ALE) and will build upon the previous positive practice established within the East London consortium – East London Adoption and Permanence Consortium (ELPAC) which is already delivering services effectively across the East region.

Over the summer 2018, and prior to formal agreement of this business case in autumn 2018 further work has begun to develop a service delivery model and engage staff in co-production of the model which enable East London to move towards regionalisation in specific areas where it makes sense to do so. Over the summer more detailed planning work has also been underway to support the successful implementation of ALE. This work will continue with the four member boroughs through the winter with transition planning and implementation beginning as soon as the business case is formally agreed.

This business case is founded on a number of key assumptions:

- There is one host for the East London RAA and it is proposed this is Havering; however, it is expected that staff will be located across all four LA sites.



- There is one Head of Service and some functions, still to be determined, that may be centrally located. Any centrally located functions, likely senior management and back office will be located in Havering.
- Adoption practices and processes will be the same across all four local authority areas
- All agencies have the resources available to actively lead on and participate in agreed work streams and achieve the deliverables within agreed timescales set out in the plan;
- Adopt London East (ALE) will work in partnership with the child's social worker at the earliest possible point, at the discretion of each Agency Decision Maker but in most cases at the point of the Placement Order being granted
- Staff affected transfer to Havering's Terms and Conditions, including pension rights, holiday entitlements and sick pay policies. Staff will be transferred to the host authority under the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) regulations (TUPE);
- Any applicable redundancy costs will be underwritten by the currently employing LAs as this will not be funded by the DfE or the host;
- Premises – ALE will be delivered from office bases in all four locality areas. This will ensure: continuity of provision as far as possible; close working relationships with children's social workers and easy access for local communities to a service within their community. A small number of workers undertaking central functions (mainly senior management and back office staff) will work from a central base in the Host authority. All RAA workers will also be expected to attend meetings within the central base in the host authority for some portion of the working week.
- All RAA workers will also be expected to work across all of the four local bases if the needs / demands of the service require it

## **The Principles**

The principles which this business case has followed were agreed by the Adopt London Executive Board which was delegated by the Association of London Directors of Children's Services (ALDCS) to oversee the development of the four London Regional Adoption Agencies. These principles have been endorsed by the DfE:

1. Local authorities involved in Adopt London and each of the four RAAs are committed to collaborating adoption arrangements so that the best interests of children and their adoptive families are secured and kept at the forefront of decision-making.
2. Adopt London will provide an overarching framework for enabling effective coordination, coherence and partnership working across London.
3. Adopt London authorities, and the four RAAs will make sure that there is consistency of approach in relation to key strategic and operational decisions, e.g. about whether staff are transferred under TUPE arrangements or seconded. Project teams in the four RAAs and RAA governance arrangements should reflect the ambition to promote such consistency of approach.
4. We are committed to working effectively together with Voluntary Adoption Agencies (VAAs), making sure that their unique and important contribution is maximised and that VAAs are involved in the development of the RAAs and Adopt London.
5. The focus of work over the next 18 months will be on establishing the four RAAs; in phase two, developmental work on the Adopt London hub will progress. We will use the Adopt London Executive Board to operate a virtual Hub in the coming period, with a view to exploring options for joint commissioning across London, maintaining common design principles for the spokes and exploring opportunities for further development of the Hub in phase 2.

## **Service delivery model, performance targets and budget**

Adopt London East is committed to designing services capable of improving outcomes for children for whom the plan is adoption through:

- Placing more children more quickly
- Placing more children in an early permanence placement
- Providing quality support to ensure fewer placement disruptions and happier families
- Improving timescales for adopter assessments

- Assessing adopters well; leading to good and speedy matches

The proposed service delivery model is based on an evidence base of what works in Adoption and on initial consultation with adopters and key stakeholders. The detailed service design will be developed through co-production with staff and all key stakeholders as detailed in section 2.3. The rationale for the design principles is explored in more detail in section 3.3

### Proposed service delivery model

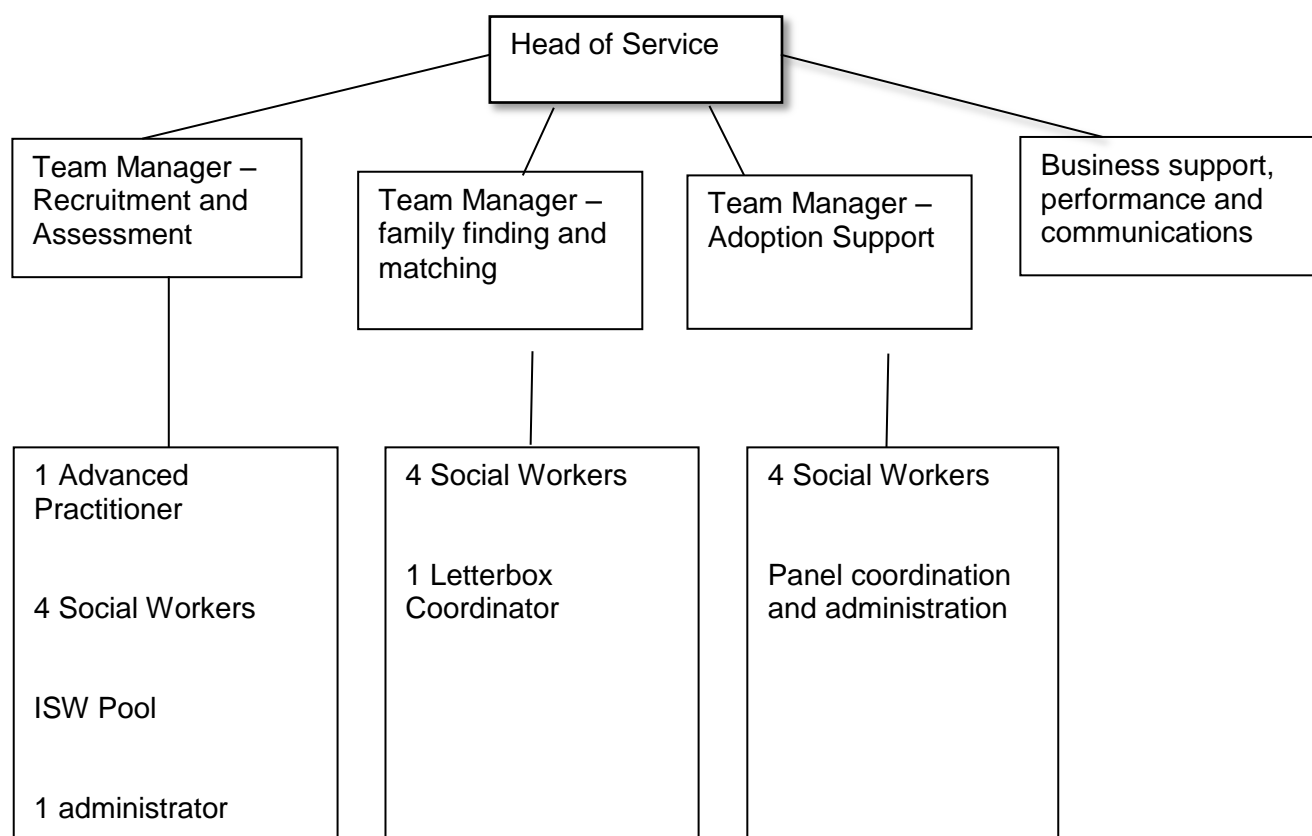
The proposed service delivery model is based on an evidence base of what works in Adoption and on initial consultation with adopters and key stakeholders. The detailed service design will be developed through co-production with staff and all key stakeholders as detailed in section 2.3. The rationale for the design principles is explored in more detail in section 3.3

The service delivery model includes one head of service and three team managers who manage the three key thematic areas in Adoption; recruitment and assessment; family finding and matching and adoption support.

Team managers will manage teams who will have workers allocated to local areas but operate as a pan East London service. All workers will be expected to operate outside specific Local Authority boundaries according to need and to meet regularly as a team.

Performance expectations and accountabilities of the RAA, Local Authority, each team and each worker must be clear.

This outline structure will be subject to further modelling and may change in some aspects of detail through the next phase of development; thematic operational Task and Finish Groups. These groups will involve first line managers, adoption social workers and adopter representatives in co-production of the working model.



**RAA performance targets** A detailed analysis of current performance has been undertaken (see section 2.4). This has been reviewed against best practice nationally and in the region. This has informed the setting of SMART performance targets for ALE. (See section 3.6)

Target	Current	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Improved Outcomes
Adopter recruitment	29	36	40	45	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Children placed within East London</li> <li>- Improved placement choice</li> <li>- Improved adopter confidence</li> </ul>
Family finding and matching	57	60	65	70	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Children placed in East London</li> <li>- Increased number of children adopted</li> <li>- Improved placement choice</li> <li>- Improved matching through placement with adopters known to agency</li> </ul>
Adopter support (no established numerical baseline)	Individual worker offer	Development of core offer  Improved engagement with providers  Improved use of grant funding			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Fewer adoption disruptions</li> <li>- Improved outcomes for adopted children</li> <li>- Improved adoptive family satisfaction</li> </ul>

## Budget

The current budget reflects staffing to the top of the scale at all grades. It is likely that the budget will reduce following more detailed analysis

A detailed rationale for budget setting and predicted savings is presented in section 4 of the report

Current adoption budgets	
Havering	313,929
Tower Hamlets	284,566
LBBD	392,646
Newham	407,042
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,398,183</b>
Cost of regionalised model	
Staffing costs	£1,327,960
Non Staffing costs	£279,396
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£1,607,356</b>
Variance	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£209,727</b>

- The total shortfall between the current contributions and the proposed RAA budget is £209,727
- It is important to note that this is the maximum possible shortfall between current budgets and the proposed RAA budgets as salaries have been costed at the highest possible spinal point. As such, the RAA partnership board will concentrate on partnership and risk sharing agreements to ensure that any underspend and savings are redistributed equitably among its member local authorities
- This business case sets out a “highest possible cost” funding model and ensures that the amount spent on the model in years 1,2 and 3 can be no more than the stated figure
- As such, the outline cost of the model is the same for years 1,2 and 3, in the knowledge that the spend will definitely be lower than the agreed amount
- The methodology for meeting the shortfall is based on reducing the number of interagency placement fees paid out for children in the RAA footprint. Effectively, the additional investment will be funded by performance improvements across the region.
- A conservative estimate of 7 (£217k at a cost of 31k per placement) additional placements made in house would cover the costs of the shortfall between the current and future budgets
- The RAA performance targets also aim to reduce interagency placements by a total of 16 by year 3 at a potential cost saving of £496k
- In the event that the RAA does not meet its targets, the extra investment in the RAA model will still be needed. The partnership and risk sharing agreements will agree how this funding will be sourced in an equitable way through each of the four local authorities
- There is also significant scope for increasing income from providing East London RAA adopters to other RAA's
- The risk sharing and partnership agreements will set out clear methodologies for budget setting and benefits (financial and other) sharing as a result of the RAA achieving its targets.
- Further savings against Children in Care budgets by each Local Authority through improved rates of leaving care for adoption and improved timeliness of placement (see section 4)

## 2. INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

### 2.1 Purpose of this document

This document sets out the case for creating a new Regional Adoption Agency (RAA) to be named ‘*Adopt London East*’ through combining the adoption services for four local authority areas in East London. It describes how establishing a single agency will allow the four authorities to provide a more cohesive, efficient and effective use of resources and promote the development of practice to the benefit of children, adopters and others who gain from adoption services. It proposes that London Borough of Havering will host the new adoption agency, the cost of implementation to be funded by the Department for Education. This document also sets out how Adopt London East will work with other RAAs pan-London to develop a Regional Hub for the provision of some services yet to be determined.

### 2.2 Background and case for change

Current measures show that performance across London is variable but, even where performance and outcomes are good, there is a case to be made that further improvement can be achieved. The current average number of children being adopted by each London borough is 11 per annum, and is also 11 in East London, which reflects the fact that each borough is trying to deliver a small specialist service for a small number of children.

Following the publication of the DfE paper, Regionalising Adoption (June 2015), the Department invited local authorities and Voluntary Adoption Agencies to submit Expressions of Interest in becoming part of new regionalised arrangements. Following the scoping phase, twenty-six London boroughs signed up in principle to joining the London RAA between November 2016 and March 2017.

London Councils hosted project resources funded via the DfE to develop the case for change that addressed London's requirements for a new model. The brand "Adopt London" was created.

The initial focus was on a London wide RAA. However, in October 2016 an Outline Business Case was approved by the member authorities and agreed by the DfE that set out a revised model that proposed four separate RAAs to be established with an option for a central hub to be iteratively developed for shared functions. The role of the hub will become clear as the programme evolves.

The recommendation was not to create a new entity or entities, but to take forward a model in which the RAA adoption service is hosted directly by London boroughs. The costs of creating a new entity were considered to be prohibitive; this was also the conclusion of other pilot RAAs around the country.

The recommendation is to create four additional RAAs to cover London, with programme coordination to deliver those functions most effectively carried out once. A fifth RAA is being developed by Harrow working with Coram. This fifth London RAA includes the south London boroughs of Wandsworth and Bromley.

The rest of this document builds on the work that has gone before to develop a more detailed business case for the East London RAA – Adopt East London.

## 2.3 Work undertaken to date and proposed methodology going forwards

Through the development of this business case a number of priority areas have emerged, some at an East London regional basis, and some pan-London which put the ambitions of regional working into practice. Taking forward these smaller projects over the last few months has helped develop and iterate our thinking, both making the case for regional working, but also creating a sense of momentum, moving to regional working where it makes sense to do so more quickly.

### Methodology for service development

The service development plan aims to model a service capable of delivering the best possible outcomes for children and adoptive families. In order to achieve this the methodology includes:

- Co-production with front line adoption staff: who know and understand the challenges in their services
- The voice of adopters and adopted young people: who know what support they need and what works for them
- Consultation with key partners and stakeholders; especially those who influence outcomes such as the East London Courts
- An understanding of current research and evidence based practice
- An understanding of current performance: locally and nationally
- Development of a learning culture of support and challenge

It is important to note the evolutionary nature of the process. An outline service delivery model has been included in the business case. This provides assurance that an effective service may be provided within an agreed budget. The design will be subject to further scrutiny through the methodology described above and may be subject to change if other models are proposed which are capable of providing improved outcomes for children and adoptive families.

### Progress to date

The service delivery model has been developed in collaboration with the service leads in each Borough. The service leads know their services well: all have been honest in appraisal of their service and open to radical change in service delivery. All service leads have agreed in broad terms the outcomes, principles and evolutionary model of service delivery as detailed in the body of the business case.

A staff engagement event will take place on 12<sup>th</sup> September 2018 and a preparatory briefing has been sent to service leads for dissemination

Service leads have identified key staff for each of three task and finish groups on: recruitment and assessment; family finding and matching and adoption support. These will meet monthly from September to December.

Initial consultation has been undertaken with adopter voice and contact made with the coordinator to establish a process for adopter comment and review of proposals from the task and finish groups

The practice lead will meet with the adopted child peer support volunteer in Havering to identify means of capturing the voice of adopted young people

The practice lead is also in the process of establishing a number of specialist consultation groups including; Panel Chairs; Virtual School Heads and CAMHS services

In depth analysis of current performance across all Local Authorities has been completed. This will provide the means of identification of best practice within the region and also areas where improvements can be made

A shared research library for use in the task and finish groups is in development

A pan London union meeting was held on 11<sup>th</sup> September 2018 and a early heads up briefing note was sent to the recognised unions across the four boroughs with follow up meetings booked.

## **2.4 Current performance**

### **Rate of children Leaving care for adoption**

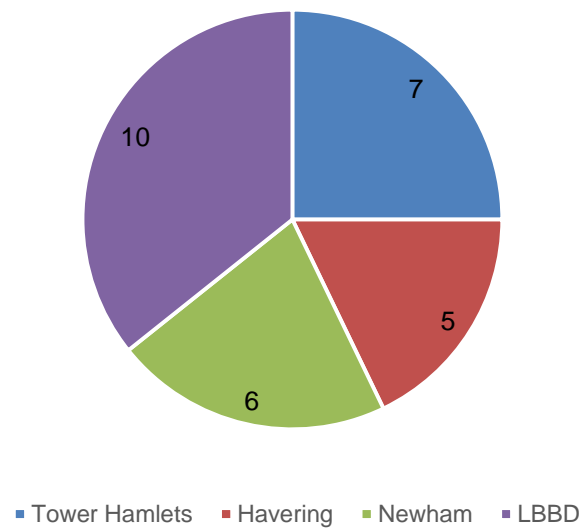
National rates of leaving care for adoption have fallen. The DfE statistical return 'Children looked after in England (including adoption), year ending 31 March 2017' Concludes that 'The number of looked after children who were adopted in 2017 decreased, continuing a decline we saw last year from a peak 5,360 in 2015. This fall was expected as since 2015 the number of looked after children with a placement order has decreased, as has the number of looked after children who were placed for adoption.'

All London Local Authorities have nevertheless performed below national averages in respect of rate of leaving care for adoption. The national average is 15% with highest performing authorities achieving 25% plus. There are a number of factors involved in this, some positive: including a high rate of placement of children with extended family members under Special Guardianship Orders

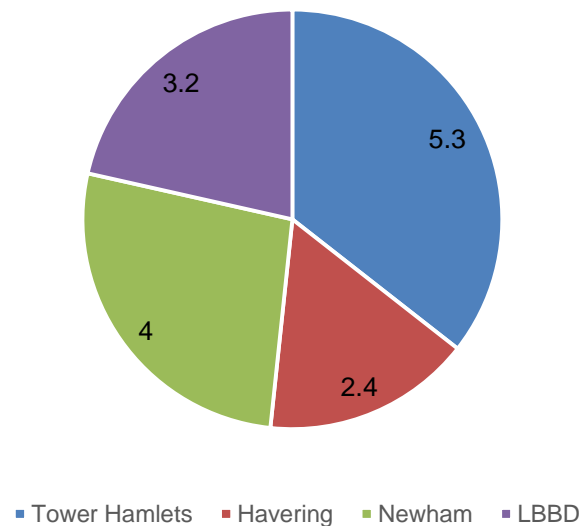
There remains a high level of fluctuation in demand for adoption and two London Local Authorities (Tower Hamlets and Newham) have seen a considerable increase in their rate over the last year, LBBB remains stable and Havering has a lower rate.

The London Courts are perceived to have a negative view of adoption. There is some evidence, however that improved parenting assessments, comprehensive early viability assessments and confident challenge to the court has positively affected the court position.

2016/17



2017/18



### Timeliness of Adoption

A review of timeliness of adoption has been undertaken using the unpublished ALB 2017/18 return from all ALE Local Authorities.

This considered all stages from Care order to placement for all children and separately for children in each Hard to Place group.

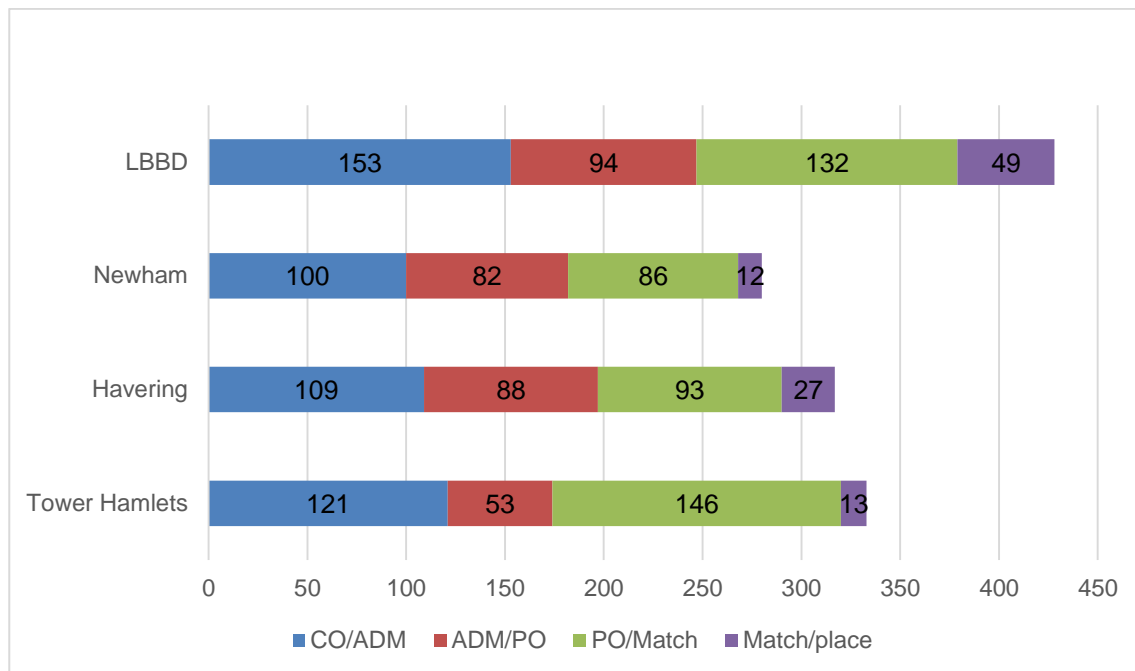
Not surprisingly, those Local Authorities who place more children in hard to place groups performed less well in timeliness.

Numbers are low and individual children may have a high effect on performance. There are nevertheless, some interesting findings and the data provides a useful baseline for discussion.

All points in the process are subject to differing pressures. It is important to note that responsibility for the child remains with the Local Authority throughout. Early communication

and preparation is essential but involvement of ALE and shared responsibility for timeliness commences at the Placement order stage.

### All children



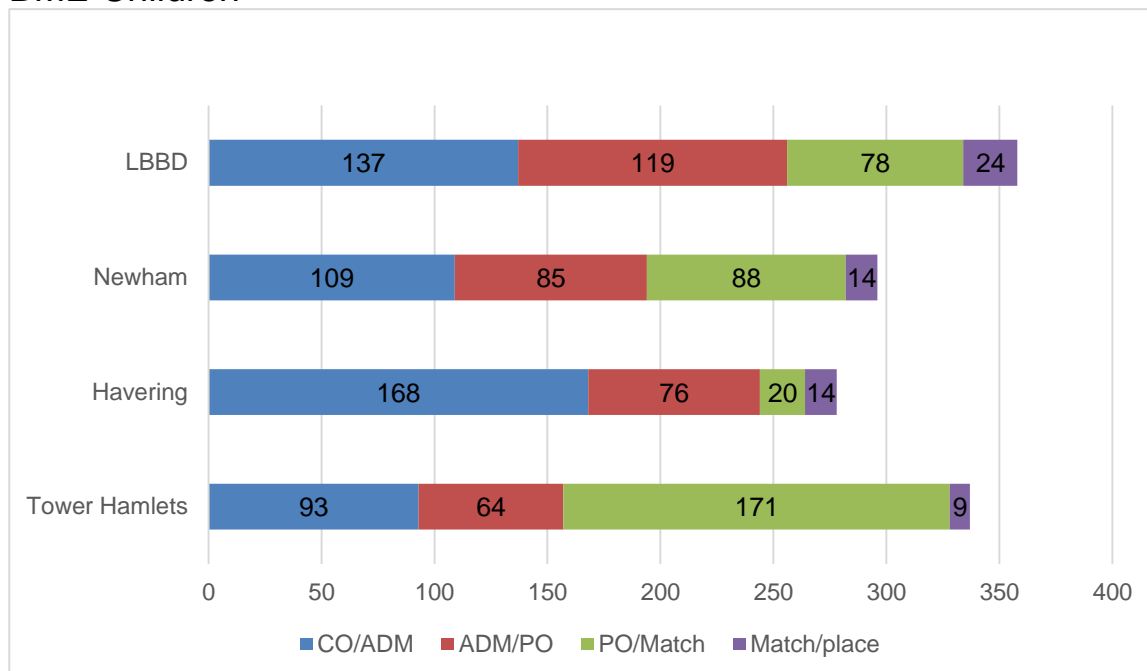
The table above shows average times in all stages for all children placed for adoption in 2017/18.

All Local Authorities except LBBD show similar times for Care Order to the Agency Decision that the child should be placed for adoption. The time taken to match children is the dimension which is most likely to be affected by placement of hard to place children. In this respect Newham performs especially well as Newham has a higher rate of leaving care for adoption and has identified placements in a timely manner. The time from Match to placement is the shortest period and therefore improvements in this field will only be marginal at best.

The last published ALB data (see Appendix 1) shows three year trends and therefore cannot be used to accurately benchmark one year averages, however from this information it appears that the ALE authorities are improving against National Averages.



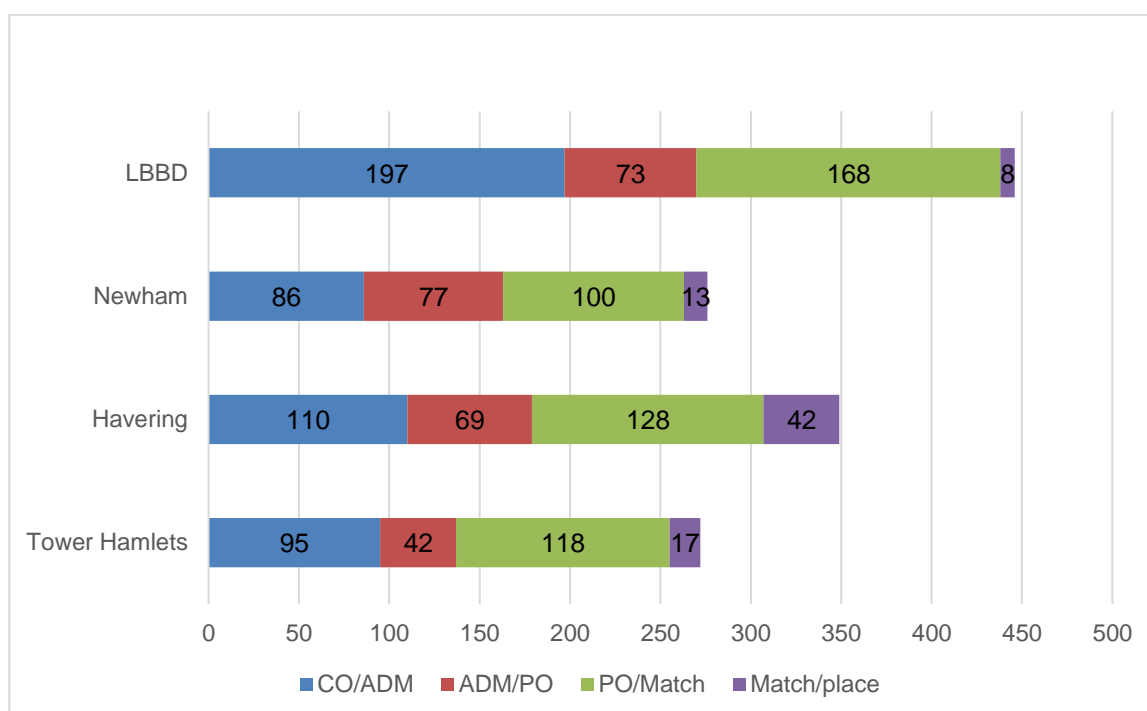
## BME Children



The percentage of children placed for adoption from BME populations varies from 75% in Newham with LBBD and Tower Hamlets both reporting approximately 50% to 17% (one child) in Havering. This is largely representative of the local population and the children available for adoption through having a placement order. Children from BME populations are typically seen to be harder to place.

Analysis of the above information shows in East London this is not the case. All authorities except Tower Hamlets show shorter timescales for PO to Match. In the case of Tower Hamlets a single lengthy search for a BME child has had a disproportionate effect.

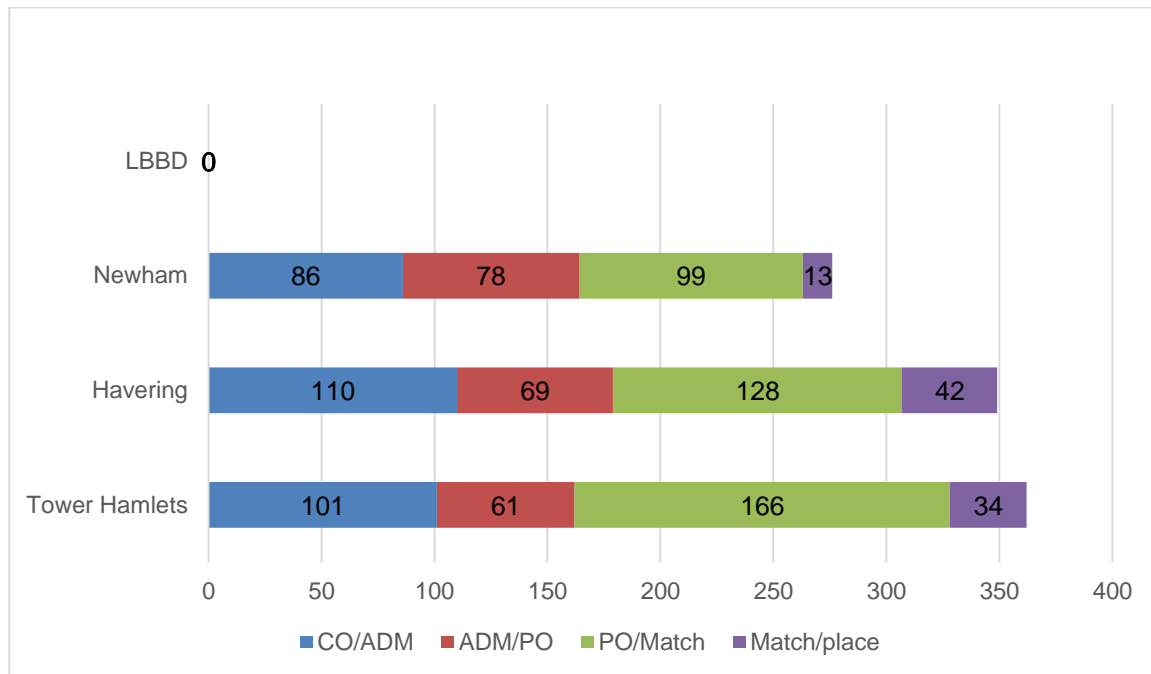
### Sibling Groups



All Local Authorities placed a roughly similar percentage, between 31% (LBBD) and 44% (Newham) Newham placed the only sibling group of 3. In Newham, Havering and Tower Hamlets at least one sibling group also contained a child over 5. Despite sibling groups and older children being considered to be hard to place all authorities except LBBD placed children in sibling groups quicker than the all children count. LBBD placed 3 sibling groups one of

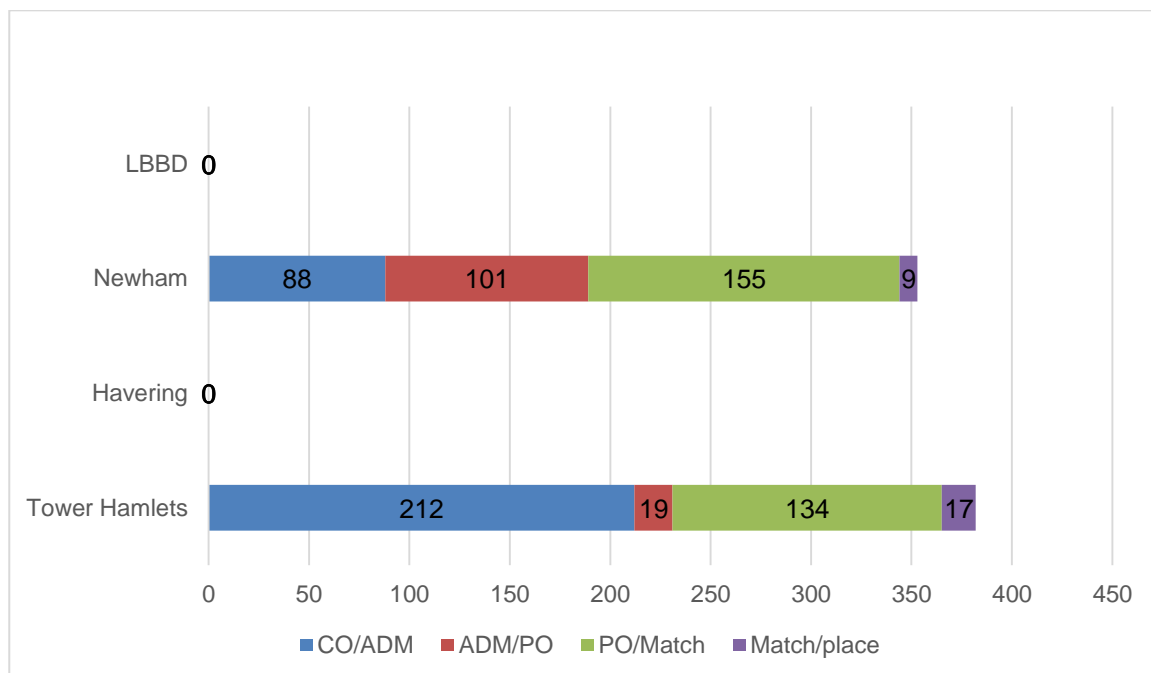
which took considerably longer to identify a match. If this group is excluded their timescales would reflect the pattern seen elsewhere.

### Children Over 5



LBBB placed no children over the age of 5. All children over 5 who were placed by any authority, were placed as part of a sibling group together with a child under the age of 5. The Newham average time for children over the age of 5 is roughly in line with the all children average. In Havering and Tower Hamlets the average time is longer but in line with expectations for this more complex to place group. In both cases the additional time taken sits within PO to Match and is indicative of the challenge of a match of both a sibling group and a child over 5.

### Disability



Only Newham and Tower Hamlets placed a child with a disability. Newham placed one child and Tower Hamlets 2. The child placed by Newham was also from a BME Population as was one of the children placed by Tower Hamlets.

The lengthy time from CO to ADM for Tower Hamlets reflects a disproportionate time taken for one child. In other respects the time from PO to Match is only slightly longer than the all child average and reflective of the harder to place dimension of this group.

### Early Permanence

Only three children were placed in early permanence placements across the ALE Authorities. From discussion with Service leads, all were either relinquished or children where risk was deemed to be negligible. It appears that progress in respect of early permanence has been slow across East London as a result of a perception of increased risk through the stance taken by the East London Courts.

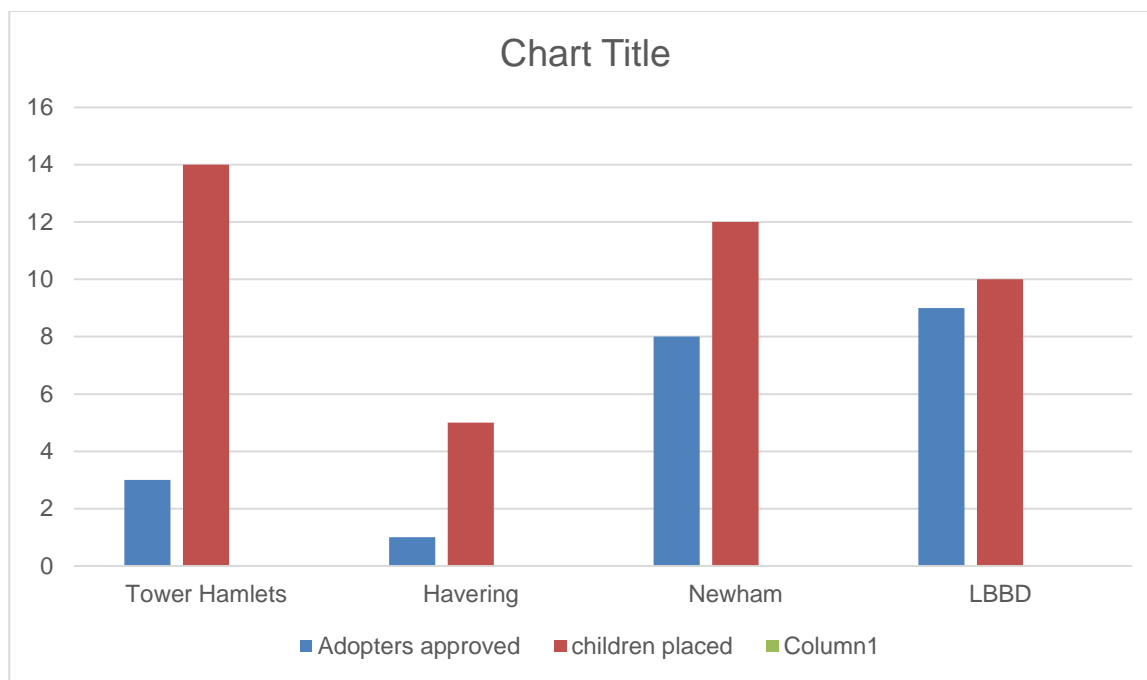
Early permanence provides children with stability at an earlier age and reduces the number of placement moves. It affords adopters the opportunity to parent their child from birth or from an early age. The evidence base for the importance of early bonding and nurture is clear. There are risks but where services have developed and embedded strong early permanence offer, adopter satisfaction and child development are seen to have improved.

This is an area for focussed attention and improvement action.

## **Adopter level performance Analysis**

### **Adopter Approval**

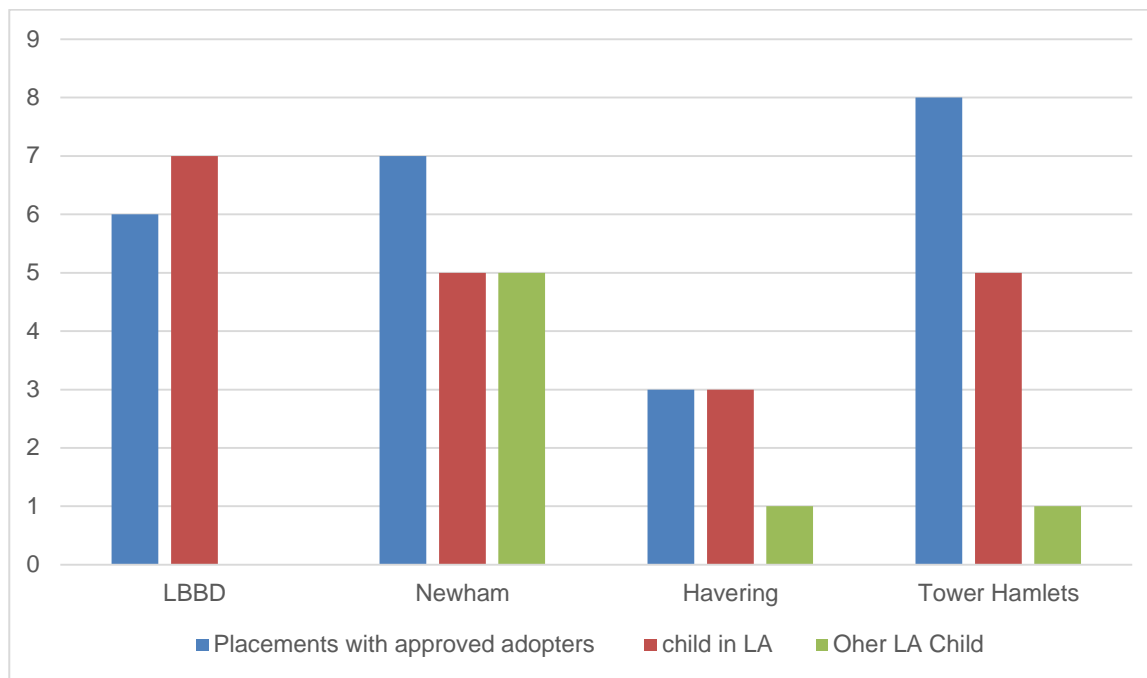
Numbers of adoptive families approved and numbers of placement families of children placed for adoption in 2017/18



All Local Authorities approved fewer adopters than the number of families of children placed for adoption in 2017/18(all sibling groups identified to be placed together have been calculated as one placement family as opposed to individual children). Statistics produced by ELPAC (which includes Redbridge) also identifies a 45% decrease in adopters recruited from the previous year and a 46% decrease in conversion rates.

Service leads have confirmed a decreased focus on adopter recruitment. A variety of reasons were given but difficulties in placing children within the immediate local area and a perception that the demographics of the local population did not fit profiles of adopters in national demand.

## Numbers of approved adopters who had a child placed in 2017/18

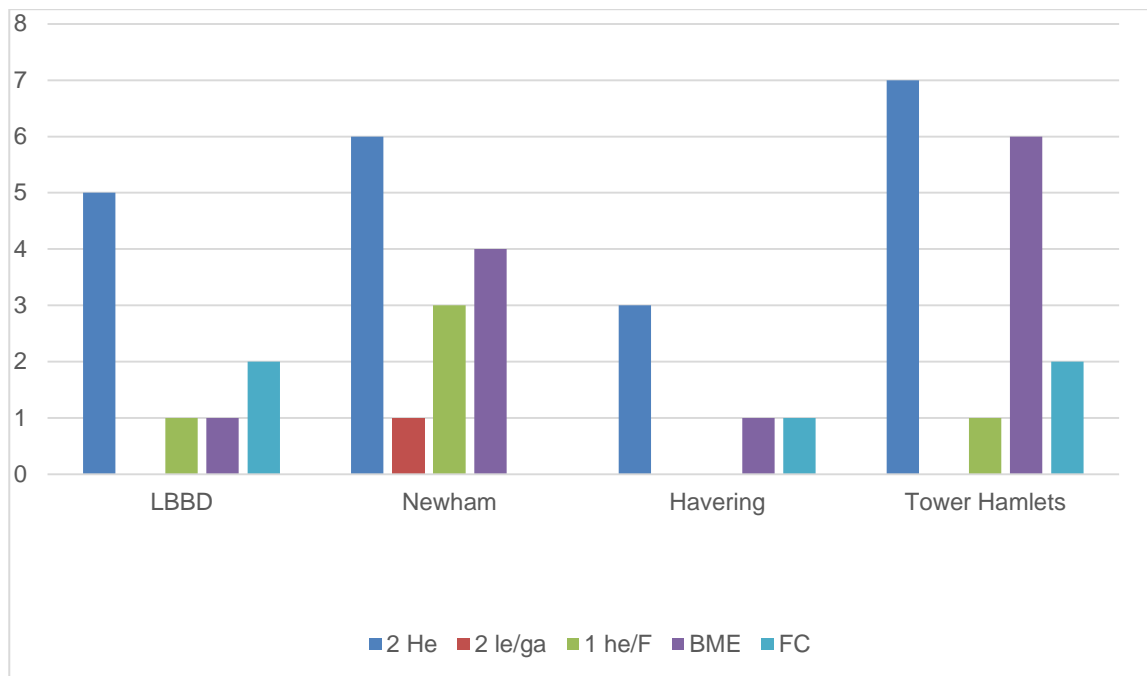


The numbers of approved adopters who had a child placed in year has been used as a measure as it evidences usability of the adopter cohort.

All Local Authorities used adopters approved in previous years and all had outliers who had been waiting some time (up to 1,646 days). In total 34 adoptive families had a total of 39 children placed. This was in excess of the 25 adopters (not including foster carers) recruited across ALE authorities.

The Local Authority breakdown of adopters who had a placement in 2017/18 ranges from 8 in Tower Hamlets to 3 in Havering. There is a large range in use of adopters in-house. LBBD used all recruited adopters for in-house children.

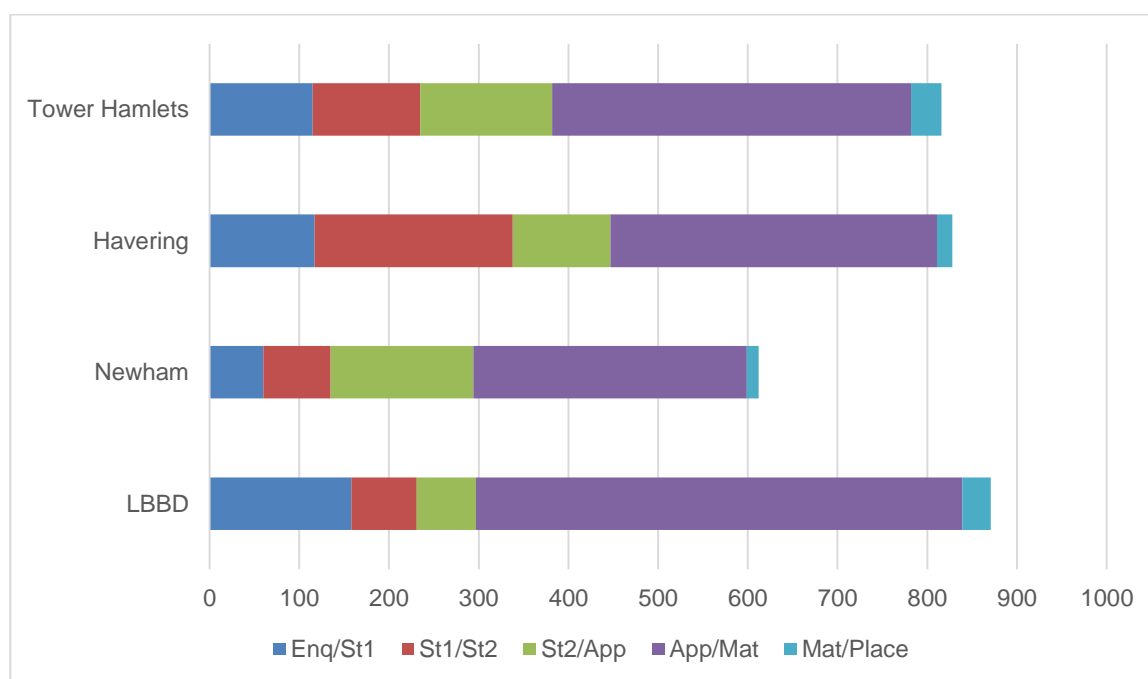
## Adopters with a child placed in 2017/18 by type



**Family Types** - All Local Authorities primarily recruited adopters who were a heterosexual couple. The next most common adopter type was single female heterosexual. Only two same sex couples were recruited, one gay and one lesbian. No single males, single gay men or single lesbian women were recruited. Gay and Lesbian people have been identified as a potential target market for adoption and recruitment in this area appears to be underdeveloped across ALE authorities.

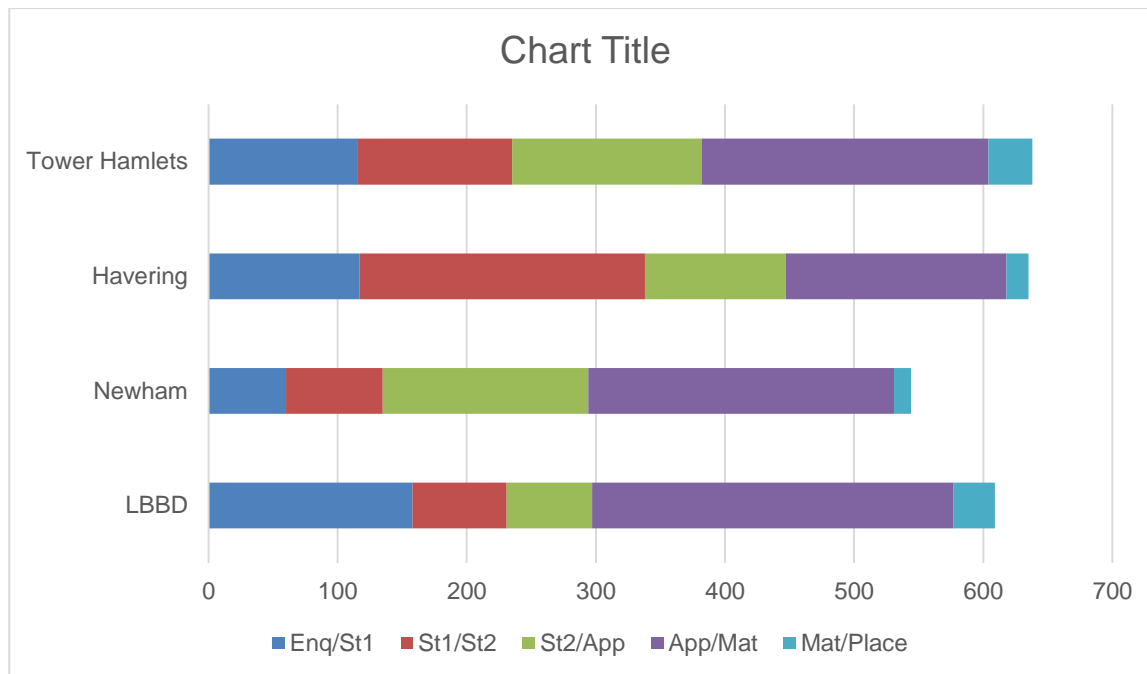
**BME and disability** - The number of adopters from BME populations and with an identified disability has been collated from all family types. For the purposes of this exercise, if either adopter in a couple is identified as BME the adoptive family has been recorded as BME. The Percentage of adopters from BME populations varies from 75% in Tower Hamlets to 25% in Havering and 17% in LBBD. No adopters were identified as having a disability. This variability is not in line with BME populations in ALE Local Authorities and it is likely that improved targeted recruitment could improve the adopter base

#### Adopter Timeliness Approval to Placement



All Local Authorities had a significant outlier of an adoptive family who had waited considerably longer for a placement. The following chart therefore excludes the significant outliers in the yellow approval to match timescale only.

#### Adopter timeliness recruitment to placement without significant outliers



The task and finish groups will be used to understand Local Authority processes and will add to an understanding of the raw data. It is likely that differences in the enquiry to stage 1, stage 1 to 2 and stage 2 to approval phases are at least in part due to differences in recording and processing adopters through each stage.

Nevertheless there are considerable differences in timescales for approval and all are higher than the national thresholds. Both Newham and LBBD have approval timescales under 300 days. Havering have timescales a third higher (469 and 447 days respectively). There is evidence in both authorities of improved timescales in more recent practice.

Some adopters have waited too long for a placement in all Local Authorities. Discussion with service leads has indicated that this is likely to be as a result of a mis-match between the adopter offer and the needs of children waiting. This has led in all ALE Local Authorities to a down turn in recruitment

#### Conclusion

This data will be used in the Adoption Recruitment Task and Finish Group to assist further exploration

From a statistical analysis of the data and conversations with service leads it appears that adopter recruitment is underdeveloped in ALE authorities

- Processes vary but are slower than national standards
- Some adopters wait too long for a match
- There is a mis-match between the adopter offer and child needs
- Some groups (e.g. Gay men and lesbian women) are under-represented
- Recruitment of adopters has not been a priority in any ALE Local Authority
- Early Permanence is under-develop and adopters not fully engaged in this option.

## 2.5 Vision of the new RAA

The proposed Regional Adoption Agency would encompass four Local Authority areas in East London. The high level targets for numbers of children placed (including sibling groups) and numbers of adopters recruited are as follows. These targets are based on 17/18 outturn data, predicted 18/19 outturn data and some conservative assumptions about what is achievable in years 1, 2 and 3.

The RAA will operate in partnership with three other RAAs and a developing Hub in London. Additional adoption functions will be provided by the Hub as regionalisation plans develop, where they can further improve the outcomes for children and achieve better value.

Across all of London the four RAAs have a shared vision to achieve excellent outcomes for children and adults affected by adoption through:

- Working closely with the Local Authorities and partners to ensure that children's best interests are at the heart of placement decisions which will fully meet their needs;
- Targeting recruitment and establishing a wider and more diverse pool of prospective adopters;
- Matching so that children are placed without delay in secure, loving families;
- Providing creative and outstanding adoption support services;
- Investing in the workforce to ensure they have the right skills and capacity to deliver excellent services;
- Continually seeking to apply best practice and innovation to our ways of working;
- Actively listening to and learning from children, adults and staff to develop and improve the services provided.

In East London further work has been undertaken to tailor the pan-London vision to the specific priorities for the region. The areas of practice improvement identified as priorities for the ALE are:

- Post-adoption support
- Development of a positive and pro-active early permanence service
- Adoptive family recruitment for harder to place children (older children, larger sibling groups, substance addicted babies, disabled children and those with special educational needs, and children from black and other ethnic minority backgrounds)
- A consistent adopter experience across East London from initial contact and recruitment through to training and post-adoption support.
- More coordinated, innovative, different and potentially larger scale contracts with voluntary sector and VAAs (better commissioning and understanding of placement providers)
- A longer-term ambition for the RAA to undertake lobbying/stakeholder work with the legal system to be more receptive to adoption
- Generally, increasing profile of and respect for the East as a region
- Ensuring the adopter and child voice is always built into the model / service
- To provide innovative and different ways of offering therapeutic and specialist support
- Ensuring that the region continues to place hard to place children, especially those in older age groups.

## 2.6 Delivery model

The decision to pursue four RAAs in London was agreed by ALDCS, and endorsed by the DfE in May 2018. This business case does not revisit that decision, but provides more detail for how the agreed delivery model will work in East London.

Whilst a number of options were considered early on including the creation of a new single entity to deliver adoption services across East London, the preferred option is to combine the four London boroughs with one borough becoming the host authority. Creation of new single entities is time consuming and costly and not a preferred option elsewhere with RAAs already live.

Governance of the RAA will operate through a board comprising of senior representatives from all LAs with representation from VAAs, adopters and adoptees. The RAA will continue to be accountable to Corporate Parenting Boards and other Local Authority bodies.

The RAA will aim to provide a high quality service to adopted children with improved

outcomes; taking the best models of delivery from each of the four services, and considering the best level of geography on which to deliver (sub-regional, regional or pan-London). The RAA will also aim to provide savings through economies of scale.

The delivery model for the RAA addresses the five areas set out by the DfE as their minimum expectations of a Regional Adoption Agency:

1. A single line of authority with the ability to act as a single service and a head of service in place.
2. Transfer of staff into the organization.
3. Inclusion of core adoption functions of recruitment and assessment of adopters, early permanence and family finding, and adoption support.
4. Pooled funding from local authorities into the RAA.
5. Pan-regional approach to matching i.e. one pool of children and adopters.

The preferred option for East London addresses these requirements and proposes to work collaboratively with 3 other RAAs across London namely:

- Adopt London West – Ealing
- Adopt London North – Islington
- Adopt London South – Southwark

## 2.7 Strategic benefits

The key aim in combining services to create a single Regional Adoption Agency is to achieve better outcomes for all children and young people with adoption plans in the region. Local Authorities and Voluntary Adoption Agencies will come together and combine adoption services into a new regional agency to benefit children and their adoptive families, with larger operating areas giving a wider pool of adopters and children, more effective matching and better support services.

The Government set out the challenges they are seeking to address nationally through the creation of Regional Adoption Agencies in the paper 'Regionalising Adoption', published in June 2015.

In summary, these are:

### **Inefficiencies**

Across London there is a highly-fragmented system with around 180 agencies recruiting and matching adopters for only 5,000 children per year (this number has subsequently decreased). The majority of agencies are operating on a small scale with over half recruiting fewer than 20 adopters in the first three quarters of 2014/15. This is not an effective and efficient scale to be operating at and is likely to mean that costs are higher because management overheads and fixed costs are shared over a smaller base. Having a system that is fragmented in this way reduces the scope for broader, strategic planning, as well as specialisation, innovation and investment. Large numbers of small agencies render the system unable to make the best use of the national supply of potential adopters, more vulnerable to peaks and troughs in the flow of children, and less cost effective.

### **Matching**

The system needs to match children with families far more quickly. Nationally, the data also shows that, as at 30 September 2015, there were 3,060 children with a placement order waiting to be matched. 38% of these children had been waiting longer than 18 months. The costs of delay, both to children and to the system, are high. It is vital that children are given the best and earliest possible chance of finding a family, irrespective of authority boundaries and lack of trust of other agencies' adopters. It is unacceptable that children are left waiting in the system when families can be found. Successful matching relies on being able to access a wide range of potential adopters from the beginning and operating at a greater scale would allow social workers to do this, thus reducing delay in the system. It could also reduce the number of children who have their adoption decisions reversed. In 2015-16, this happened to



900 children nationally. Furthermore, the opportunity for practice innovation created by moving to a new delivery model also has real potential to improve matching.

### **Recruitment**

Whilst there has been growth in adopter recruitment there are too few adopters willing and able to adopt children with a range of different backgrounds and life circumstances. Recruitment from a wider geographical base as part of a regional recruitment strategy. Incentives also need to be better aligned and recruitment activity more nuanced and targeted so that agencies are encouraged to recruit the right kind of adopters given the characteristics of the children waiting. Recruitment from a wider geographical base than an individual local authority, that takes account of the needs of children across a number of those local authorities in a regional recruitment strategy and uses specialist techniques for recruiting adopters for hard to place children, would potentially lead to fewer children waiting.

### **Adoption Support**

Currently adoption support services are provided by a mix of local authority provision, the NHS and independent providers (voluntary adoption agencies, adoption support agencies and small independent providers). There is a risk that the public and independent sectors are unlikely to be able to grow sufficiently to meet increased demand for adoption support. There are regional gaps in the types of services on offer and little evidence of spare capacity. The sector is currently dominated by spot purchasing and sole providers. This is not an efficient way to deliver these services. For providers to expand and therefore operate at a more efficient scale, services need to be commissioned on bigger and longer term contracts. RAAs should enable this to be done. It is envisaged that the Hub will act as a conduit to the wider voluntary sector, providing economies of scale and opportunities for innovation

### **The Local Perspective**

The statutory functions required of local authorities in respect of adoption are provided by each of the four local authorities within their own geographic areas. There is already a great deal of joint working between the four adoption agencies to provide parts of the current service.

Joining the four local authority services together within Adopt London East will enable efficiencies to be achieved and improvements to services for all those affected by adoption.

In terms of recruiting adoptive parents some of the agencies are currently competing with each other. There is a duplication of effort and associated costs with the risk that people wanting to be considered as adoptive parents are confused about where and how to proceed with their enquiry. Adopt London East will have a single point of contact for prospective adopters, reducing the current fragmentation of services. Similarly, a single point of entry to the adoption service locally will improve access to adoption support services for adoptive families, and also for adopted adults and birth family members, who have a statutory entitlement to receive a service.

Combining the services should ensure that management overheads and fixed costs will be reduced over time. The new service will allow for the more efficient use of staff time, for example Adopt London East may deliver training and preparation courses at stage one and two of the adoption process across the whole area resulting in less duplication and more timely access to the training courses for prospective adopters. adoptive parents as trainers.

There are currently four Adoption Panels (some of which are joint fostering / adoption) operating across the four Local Authorities. ALE will have one Adoption Panel which will consider applications from prospective adopters. These will be held more regularly and across all four boroughs. Agency Decisions in relation to prospective adopter approvals will be made by the Agency Decision Maker for the RAA. Therefore it will no longer be necessary for the four Local Authorities to retain their individual Adoption Panels, but each will continue to have a designated Agency Decision Maker for considering and agreeing the plan that a child should be placed for adoption and agreeing the match to appropriate adopters.

The new combined service provides the opportunity for the provision of a service of

excellence for adoption support. This will be a multi-disciplinary service in partnership with colleagues from health and education and providing comprehensive and high level targeted support for adopted children, adoptive parents, adopted adults and birth family members

ALE will aim to reduce the proportion of children whose plans are changed from adoption because an adoption placement cannot be found as well as reduce the number of adoption placement disruptions. The RAA will bring the existing local expertise among managers and social workers together in respect of what makes a good match. Good permanence planning and tracking processes will ensure a high proportion of children are referred to the RAA prior to the point of Placement Order. Early identification of children with likely adoption plans and effective liaison with the child's social worker during the court proceedings will enable fuller and more accurate assessments of an individual child's needs to inform matching, and prepare the child. Strategic needs-led recruitment will also widen choice of potential adoptive families for children, which will lead to better and more sustainable matching.

Benefits will be delivered through adopting the "best practice" from the four contributing organisations. This will be of particular value in delivering benefits from the areas of Early Permanence (concurrency and fostering to adopt), improved adoption support, making optimal use of colleagues in health and education as well as those in ALE registered as social workers and those without social work qualifications but with other relevant knowledge, skills and experience.

## 2.8 Strategic risks

- There is a risk to all Local Authorities who fail to join a regional agency. This would include central government directing how its services would be delivered. .
- Major reorganisation of adoption services in the region may have an impact on service delivery to children and adoptive families in the short term. To mitigate these risks, practice is being regionalised more quickly where it makes sense to do so, and implementation will be on a phased basis. Performance measures aligned with the revised operating model and regular monitoring arrangements will be established between the host and non-host authorities as quickly as possible and before go-live for the new arrangements. This approach to governance, quality assurance and performance management will draw on lessons learned and best practice
- Separation of functions could cause delay through ineffective communication. The service delivery model promotes co-location and local delivery in all four Local Authority areas. Effective information sharing agreements and close working relationships between children's and adoption social workers will mitigate against this risk
- Any future difference in opinion across the LAs as to the role and scope of ALE and future governance arrangements could delay implementation.
- The organisational staffing levels proposed in this business case have been based on actual demand experienced over the past three years, however because of the current difficulties in predicting the levels of activity (e.g., numbers of children with adoption plans) there is a risk that suggested staffing levels might not be consistent with demand.
- There is risk, even regionally, of not being able to recruit adopters able to meet the needs of the children waiting, leading to more interagency placements and financial viability issues. More coordinated and targeted recruitment activity is expected to address this, scope for enhanced recruitment and assessment has been built into the delivery model.
- Any change management process can be unsettling for staff. The proposed changes to ways of working could lead to a risk of recruitment challenges and the retention of existing experienced and qualified adoption team workforce for the ALE. The engagement of staff directly involved in the delivery of adoption services, and the involvement of current service users will be essential mitigation alongside keeping colleagues in partner organisations informed. The project team have been engaging

with staff at service and operational levels to ensure they are engaged and enthused about the opportunities of a joint agency.

All of the above risks and specific local risks will be considered during set and implementation of the RAA. The partnership board will review and mitigate for both new and existing risks and issues as they arise.

## 2.9 Realising the benefits of the RAA

Benefits expected to be realised through the project include:

- Improved timescales for adopter assessments
- Higher conversion rate from enquiry to approval of prospective adopters based on better understanding of the most successful routes to adoption
- Early identification of children with potential adoption plans and more children placed on an Early Permanence (Fostering to Adopt or concurrency) basis
- Reduction in the number of children for whom the permanence plan has changed away from adoption
- Increase in the percentage of children adopted for care
- More timely matching of approved adopters
- Improved timescales for placing children with their adoptive families
- Fewer prospective adopter approvals rescinded as approved adopters are not matched with a child
- Fewer adoption placement disruptions pre and post adoption order
- Improved performance measurement and management across the service
- Reduced interagency placements and fees

Section 3.7 contains the proposed performance and QA approach which would enable us to understand whether the RAA is delivering the strategic benefits as envisioned.

## 2.10 Stakeholder engagement and involvement

Consultation with stakeholders is an integral part of the Regional Adoption Agency project. The section below sets out the stakeholders engaged during the course of the project so far. Their feedback has been incorporated into the future model and will continue to lay the basis for service design and amendments going forwards.

### Adopters

Adopters in East London Boroughs have contributed to service development through two Adopter Voice forums. Key themes from the forums include the importance of:

- A supportive social worker at all stages of the process
- Continuity of service delivery both pre and post adoption
- Early intervention and support from a known person
- Peer networks and safe places for adopters and adopted children to meet
- Support with family contact
- Schools informed about attachment and use their pupil premium well.
- Responsive and understanding health services
- All services working together well. A 'one stop shop' for service delivery

Service Directors - Since **April 2018**,

an RAA Project Board has been set up to oversee the successful implementation of Adopt London East. The board is chaired by the Director of Children's Services in the host authority and consists of Assistant Directors and Heads of Service in respective local authorities; thus providing senior leadership and governance. The RAA Project Board meet regularly every **six weeks**. So far, representation from senior stakeholders has not only sustained interest in the project but it has also been fundamental to driving the project forward by making key decisions and unblocking problems.

Adoption staff

All adoption staff have been provided with a brief information document to keep them abreast of our current position and explain the draft proposed model. In addition to this, an upcoming Staff Engagement Event is set to take place on 12<sup>th</sup> September, 2018. Staff will have the opportunity to learn more about the benefits of regionalisation and participate in a workshop to discuss elements of the model. Service Managers have nominated staff to be involved in Task and Finish groups to focus on Recruitment and Assessment, Family Finding & Matching and Adoption Support. Staff involved in these task and finish groups will act as champions and will help design and co-produce the new RAA. By adopting a co-production approach of doing things “with” and not “to” our adoption staff Adopt London East will be a highly desired place where staff want to work.

#### Wider Staff across Children’s services

Newsletters are distributed every **six weeks** to all staff across Children’s Services to provide brief information on updates and an overview on anticipated changes to the service.

In addition to this the following Workstreams have been developed to involve wider staff in specialist areas:

- Practice: This workstream is made up of Heads of Service/Service Managers and includes developing the practice model of the RAA through process mapping.
- HR: This workstream includes mapping the as-is workforce, identifying roles, partial roles and functions that will move to the RAA, developing a new structure and job descriptions.
- IT: This includes mapping as-is IT systems, developing a practical and immediate solutions drawing on learning from other RAAs where different IT systems are used, develop approach to data sharing, scope future IT solution.
- Commissioning: This includes identifying existing externally commissioned services across the authorities within the scope of the RAA and making recommendations about transition arrangements.
- Finance: This includes mapping existing cost of in-scope functions, developing financial model for new RAA and proposals for reviewing the financial arrangements.
- Legal and governance: This includes ensuring new proposed approach meets legal requirements, developing the governance structure of the new RAA.
- Accommodation and logistics: This includes reviewing whether collocation of RAA staff is appropriate, and if it is, where they should be colocated, when they should move, how this will be funded.
- Communications and engagement: This workstream is about ensuring that all key stakeholders are kept up to date and are engaged in the design of the new RAA arrangements. It will include delivery of events, newsletters, workshops etc.

These on-going workstreams have multiple representations from each local authority. The involvement of staff across the wider service has been an effective way of extracting specialist knowledge, skills and tools into the development of this model in order to develop a realistic implementation plan.

## 3. RAA OPERATING MODEL

### 3.1 Learning from best practice

Research identifies several factors which contribute to timely, successful family finding and matching outcomes for children with a plan of adoption. The University of Bristol (June 2010)

and Oxford University (Feb 2015) identified within research briefs, key factors seen to enhance the adoption journey for both children and their prospective adopters.

- Quality of information – all information at all parts of the process must be of **high quality, factual and comprehensive**. Poor quality information is identified as a direct correlation to disruption.
- Local authorities with access to a **wider pool** of prospective adopters experienced less delay in their family finding and matching processes.
- **Family finding done at the point of ADM** decision (rather than at the granting of the placement order) resulted in children experiencing less delay.
- Delay was reduced when case responsibility for **children transferred to adoption service** at point of placement order.
- Delay was also reduced when **early family finding strategies** were agreed for individual children deemed to have complex needs.
- **Tracking** of children throughout their journey is critical and adoption workers involved in this can drive the process.
- **Timely joint decision making** re whether to pursue ethnic matches or sibling separation also reduced delay for children.
- **Post placement support** (in a variety of formats) is particularly valued by adopters, contributes to positive transitions and reduces the risk of disruptions.

Proposals contained within this business case have taken account of these key factors alongside the need for quality and efficiency.

## 3.2 Scope

The target operating model for the new RAA considers its role in the delivery of the following main services across East London:

- Recruitment and Assessment – to provide the prospective adopters;
- Permanence Planning – Identifying children who need adopting;
- Matching and Placement – to match prospective adopters with children in need of adoption;
- Pre and Post Placement Support – to help all affected by adoption.

### 3.2.1 Roles and Responsibilities

The table below sets out the RAA and LAs will work together, summarising roles and responsibilities for each:

Function	Regional Adoption Agency	Local Authority
<b>RECRUITMENT AND ASSESSMENT</b>		
Marketing and Recruitment Strategy	✓	
Adopter Recruitment and Enquiries	✓	
Assessment of Prospective Adopters – all Stage One and Stage Two functions	✓	
Completion of Prospective Adopter Report	✓	
Agency Decision Maker for approval of adopters	✓	
Post approval training	✓	
Matching	✓	
Post Placement training for Prospective Adopters	✓	
<b>PERMANENCE PLANNING</b>		
Early identification of a child possibly requiring adoption	✓	✓
Tracking and monitoring the child possibly requiring adoption	✓	✓

Function	Regional Adoption Agency	Local Authority
Support and advice to child care social worker on the adoption process	✓	✓
Sibling or other specialist assessments if commissioned by LA	✓	✓
Direct work to prepare child prior to placement	✓	✓
Preparation of the Child Permanence Report		✓
Agency Decision Maker for “Should be placed for Adoption” decisions		✓
Case management prior to the point agreed by the LA ADM		✓
Case management from point agreed by the LA ADM		✓
<b>MATCHING AND PLACEMENT</b>		
Family finding	✓	
Looked After Child reviews	✓	✓
Shortlist potential families	✓	
Visit potential families	✓	✓
Organising child appreciation day	✓	
Ongoing direct work to prepare child prior to placement	✓	
Adoption Panel administration and management	✓	✓
Agency adviser role	✓	
Agency Decision Maker for Matching prospective adopters and child		✓
Placement Planning meeting administration and management of introductions	✓	
Support to family post placement and planning and delivery of adoption support	✓	
Ongoing life story work and preparation of Life story book		✓
Independent Review Officer monitoring of quality of child’s care and care plan		✓
Support prospective adopters in preparation and submission of application for Adoption Order – including attending at court	✓	
Preparation of later life letter	✓	✓
<b>ADOPTION SUPPORT</b>		
Assessment for adoption support	✓	
Developing and delivering adoption support plans	✓	
Agree and administer financial support to adoptive families pre and post Adoption Order		✓
Adoption support delivery including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support groups</li> <li>• Social events</li> <li>• Post adoption training</li> <li>• Independent Birth Relative services</li> <li>• Support with ongoing birth relative contact</li> <li>• Adoption counselling and training</li> </ul>	✓	
Financial support to adopters including adoption allowances		✓
<b>NON-AGENCY ADOPTIONS</b>		
Step parent/partner adoption assessments	✓	

Function	Regional Adoption Agency	Local Authority
Inter-country adoption assessments and post approval and post order support	✓	

### 3.3 Overview of the Proposed Organisation and design principles of ELRAA

Adopt London East is committed to designing services capable of improving outcomes for children for whom the plan is adoption through:

- Placing more children more quickly
- Placing more children in an early permanence placement
- Providing quality support to ensure fewer placement disruptions and happier families
- Improving timescales for adopter assessments
- Assessing adopters well; leading to good and speedy matches

#### Design Principles

The proposed service delivery model is based on an evidence base of what works in Adoption and on initial consultation with adopters and key stakeholders. The detailed service design will be developed through co-production with staff and all key stakeholders as detailed in section 2.3.

A number of principles have influenced the delivery model

A base in each Local Authority. This ensures a visible presence in each area and promotes local adopter recruitment. The adopter voice tells us of the importance for them of continuity of existing relationships and a 'one stop shop' for support in their local area.

Close relationships with children's social workers. These will be promoted through maintenance of the local base. In order to ensure identification of children who may require adoption, a single permanence tracker and information sharing process will be developed on best practice principles. Adopt London East will aim to provide a seamless service working in partnership with children's social workers. The service will also provide training, advice and support for workers in each Local Authority on all adoption matters, including completion of Child Permanence Reports and Life Story Books.

Specialist responsive teams working across all Local Authorities. Currently each Local Authority has a small adoption team and most are integrated within other permanence services. In some Local Authorities adoption social workers undertake all adoption associated tasks. The evidence base tells us that specialism of adoption workers to specific functions improves timeliness and quality of work. The service will develop three teams: Adoption recruitment and assessment; family finding and matching and adoption support. Workers in these teams will have a local base but will work across East London as a single team. Workers may take on work outside their Local Authority boundary as a result. This is not a radical change in working practice as adopters are often recruited and supported outside Local Authority boundaries.

Innovation and service improvement. The increased size of the service allows for innovation in all areas. Recruitment of adopters across a wider geographical area allows for a targeted approach based on an understanding of local need. A dedicated communications service will be able to provide low cost and effective promotions. As well as improved options for matching, the family finding team will be able to focus on development and promotion of early permanence options. Adoption support will benefit from development of a core early intervention offer as requested by our adopters through use of a team of workers with specialist skills and the ability to deliver joint packages of support. Innovation through co-



production; investment in staff and an understanding of research and the evidence base will be developed as part of a learning culture within the organisation.

Flexible and responsive service. Demand for placements and supply of adopters is subject to considerable fluctuation. All agencies are also reporting increased demand for adoption support. Adoption regulations are subject to review and court decisions subject to developing case law. Incoming populations place new demands on services. The service will develop an ability to provide a flexible response through: service review; innovation; cross team working and development of strong partnerships.

Investment in Staff. Development of a Regional Adoption Agency allows staff to develop skills within a larger organisation with a single focus on Adoption. The larger service also provides a clear promotion route for adoption specialist workers. The organisation will embed a learning culture and ensure investment in staff to meet the ever changing demands for adoption services. The service commitment to co-production of service development is a reflection of the value placed on the staff voice.

Adopter Voice and the voice of the child. The service will incorporate the adopter and child voice at the heart of all activity. All best practice evidence shows that development of direct and virtual adopter forums and means of direct communication with children improves service delivery and has a positive effect on adoptive family satisfaction. Our own adopters commented in consultation on the importance for them of peer networks and safe places for adopters and adopted children to meet.

Positive engagement with all partners and stakeholders. The service will engage positively with all partners in both statutory and voluntary sectors to ensure service providers meet their obligations and provide the best possible services to our adopters. The service will also work with agencies such as the courts and CAFCAS to develop mutual understanding, improve services and challenge where appropriate.

Provision of Value for Money. Economies of scale will reduce spend on areas where efficiencies may be made. Improved adopter recruitment will substantially reduce spend on inter-agency fees. Improved rates of leaving care for adoption and timeliness in placement for adoption will provide savings in in-house budgets for all Local Authorities. Further savings will be made through the Pan London approach to commissioning. The service will also aim to expand service provision through bidding for ASF, PIF and other funds.

### **Proposed service delivery model**

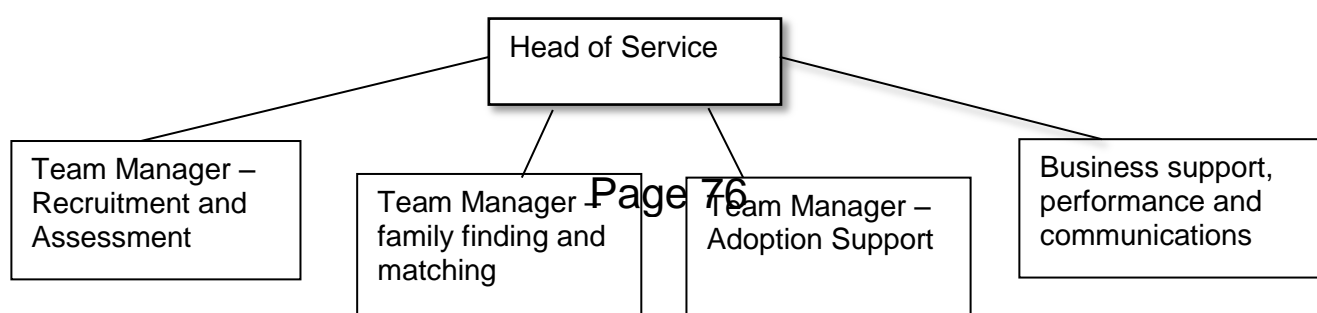
The proposed service delivery model is based on an evidence base of what works in Adoption and on initial consultation with adopters and key stakeholders. The detailed service design will be developed through co-production with staff and all key stakeholders as detailed in section 2.3. The rationale for the design principles is explored in more detail in section 3.3

The service delivery model includes one head of service and three team managers who manage the three key thematic areas in Adoption; recruitment and assessment; family finding and matching and adoption support.

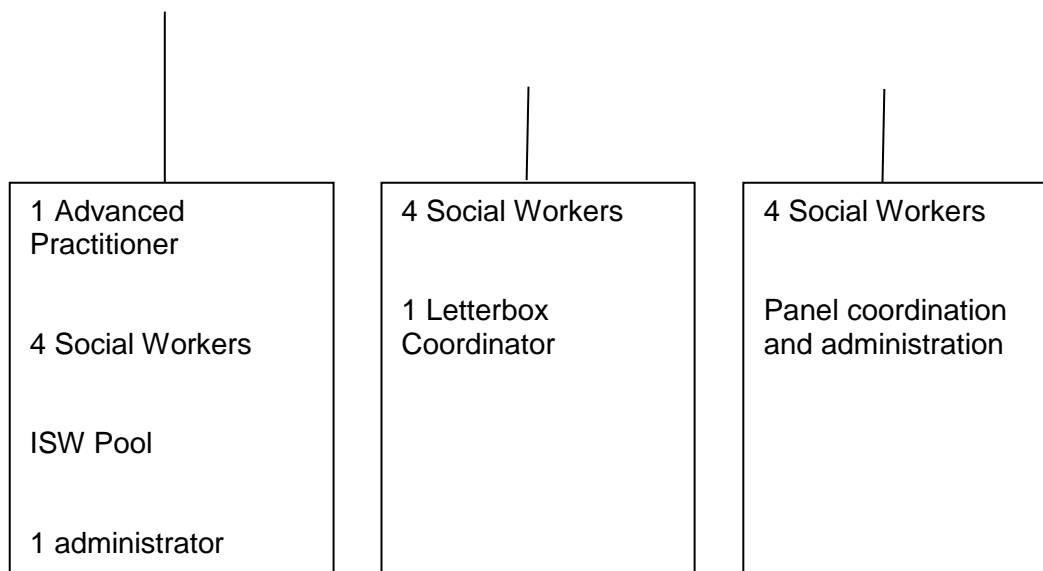
Team managers will manage teams who will have workers allocated to local areas but operate as a pan East London service. All workers will be expected to operate outside specific Local Authority boundaries according to need and to meet regularly as a team.

Performance expectations and accountabilities of the RAA, Local Authority, each team and each worker must be clear.

This outline structure will be subject to further modelling and may change in some aspects of detail through the next phase of development; thematic operational Task and Finish Groups. These groups will involve first line managers, adoption social workers and adopter representatives in co-production of the working model.







### 3.4 Property and IT Implications

#### **Property implications**

The property implications for each of the local authorities, with the exception of Havering (as the lead authority) remain unchanged. The expectation is that there will be a maximum of 4 adoption specific workers per local authority based on site at any one time and their space will be provided through existing resources.

Havering as the lead authority will need to provide extra space for some centralised functions:

- The RAA head of service
- Up to 3 team managers for some portion of the week
- 3 administration posts
- Up to 3 letterbox co-ordination posts
- Accommodation for all RAA staff at least one day per month for service meetings, team building and other all staff events.
- Accommodation for thematic team meetings for 6-7 people, half a day, per team, per month.

#### **IT implications**

- The proposal is that all RAA staff will transfer across to Havering's IT system (Liquid Logic) as permanent employees of Havering council. There will be no costs for the transfer over and above the costs for IT which are covered by both the on-costs / staff overheads and hosting costs included in the full financial business model

### 3.5 HR Implications and Activities

The HR comments of this report set out the current position with regard to the applicability of the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 (TUPE). In line with the minimum expectation of the DfE, staff in scope of this new East London Regional Adoption Agency are expected to transfer into the host borough, Havering Council, under TUPE regulations.

It is envisaged that these proposals will initiate significant changes to the way Adoption services are delivered across the four boroughs and ultimately new ways of working.

The TUPE regulations impose limitations on the ability of the new employer and employee to agree a variation to the terms and conditions unless there is a genuine Economic, technical or organisational (ETO) reason:

- There needs to be a valid business reason for the change
- The ETO reason must 'entail changes to the workforce'. This means that changes to workforce numbers or job functions must be the objective of plan
- Changes to location of work are now covered as an ETO reason under TUPE. This means that TUPE-related relocations will not be treated as automatically unfair but should still be treated in line with the normal employment principles in terms of formal consultation.

Therefore, it is likely that as well as informing/consulting as part of the TUPE process, formal consultation will take place with staff and unions on the new structure, location and job descriptions triggering a change management process.

It is recognised that all local authorities are likely to follow a similar change management process. However, a proposed Change Management "Terms of Agreement" has been developed and aims to provide clarity and equity between the boroughs throughout the management of the change process. This agreement has been consulted upon with HR leads across the boroughs and will then be shared with the unions.

Both the TUPE and restructuring consultation processes will be managed in line with the ACAS guidelines and will run concurrently.

Where possible, the existing boroughs will seek to redeploy their own employees prior to the transfer date. Any redundancy costs will be the responsibility of the incumbent borough. The host borough will need to consider additional ongoing liability cost which may not be covered in on-cost i.e. Barrister costs associated with an employment tribunal and who will be responsible for those costs.

### **Pensions:**

All local authorities, pensions provisions are provided under the Local Government Pensions Scheme. The actuary have confirmed that a bulk transfer is only applicable if 10 or more members are transferring from any one previous organisation.

Each local authority is unlikely to be transferring 10 or more members, therefore, the process for bulk transfers is not applicable. The process that will need to be followed is that of a normal transfer from a previous Local Government Pension Scheme i.e.:

- The members will be admitted to the London Borough of Havering pension scheme and will then be subject to 22% employer contribution rate (the employee rate is dependant upon their salary)
- The pension team will write to the previous authorities requesting transfer estimates, calculated in accordance with actuarial guidance issued by the Secretary of State
- Once the details are received, the pensions team will write to the members, highlighting the 'pros and cons' of transferring and ask them to make their decision.
- If members elect to transfer, the pension team will ask the previous authority to make the payment of the relevant transfer value.
- The transfer value, paid from the pension fund, should be enough to cover previous pension liabilities so there is no need for any budget from individual services for pension costs.

However, if any local authority exceeds the bulk transfer number of 10 members, then the process will need to be reviewed and could impact on timescales and costs. The above process will be factored into the formal consultation period.

## **3.6 RAA Performance and Outcomes**

### **Targets**

More details, including exact targets and outcomes, will be worked up with staff as part of the task and finish group process. Initial work undertaken across the four authorities suggests that there are some meaningful and very achievable targets in the three key areas listed below:

#### Adopter Recruitment and Assessment

It is a generally accepted national standard that each adoption assessment worker is able to undertake 9 completed full assessments per year in addition to stage 1 work. Two of the London Boroughs have indicated there is potential for further Adopter recruitment in their area, no Borough actively recruits adopters and several Boroughs have indicated adopter recruitment is not a priority given their difficulty in placing within the immediate local area. There are therefore strong indications that a focussed and cost effective recruitment campaign and a dedicated team will be able to increase adopter recruitment from the current figure of 29 approvals in year to a target of 45 over three years. This would result in a saving of at least £496,000 in interagency fees. If sibling groups were placed savings would be considerably higher.

#### Family finding and matching

The rate of children leaving care for adoption across the East London Boroughs remains low. The use of placement with family members under an SGO is well embedded and some local communities have positive extended family networks which promoted this model. It is unlikely that the East London Authorities will achieve national average rates of leaving care for adoption, nevertheless early indications from review of hard to place children indicates that more children could be placed for adoption. 57 children were placed in 2017/18, a considerable increase on previous years. ALE would have the capacity to family find and match 70 children.

#### Adoption support

Adoption support is under-developed in all Boroughs. The adoption support team would have capacity to provide a small but good quality core service, working with local adopters and adopter voice as well as local providers to provide:

- Advice guidance and support including sign-posting
- Adoption Support Assessments (up to 100 PA)
- Adopter support groups
- Adopter training
- Applications to the ASF
- Some direct work

The outline outcomes framework below sets out the targets listed above, alongside some key outcome improvement areas:

Target	Current	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Improved Outcomes
Adopter recruitment	29	36	40	45	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Children placed within East London</li> <li>- Improved placement choice</li> <li>- Improved adopter confidence</li> </ul>
Family finding and matching	57	60	65	70	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Children placed in East London</li> <li>- Increased number of children adopted</li> <li>- Improved placement choice</li> <li>- Improved matching through placement with adopters known to agency</li> </ul>
Adopter support (no established)	Individual worker offer	Development of core offer  Improved engagement with			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Fewer adoption disruptions</li> <li>- Improved outcomes for adopted children</li> <li>- Improved adoptive family satisfaction</li> </ul>

numerical baseline)		providers Improved use of grant funding	
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The Department for Education are also providing ongoing guidance around performance monitoring and quality assurance. The RAA will make sure it continues to monitor it's outcomes in line with both local and national best practices.

### 3.8 Communications, Marketing and PR

The key aim in merging adoption services is to have a wider pool of prospective adopters from various backgrounds to ensure even the most hard-to-reach children can enjoy stability with loving families. Adopt London East seeks to increase the quality and quantity of adoption applicants across the sub-region and drive the placement of our most hard-to-reach children including: sibling groups, adolescents, BME children, and children with learning difficulties. To achieve this, effective communication and marketing is required.

In 2013, the Department for Education commissioned Kindred to carry out a research study to identify effective communication and marketing channels that should be used when engaging with potential adopters in order to, ultimately, encourage them to adopt a child. Their findings provide insight into the common demographics, motivations and attitudes towards adoption. They have also developed six key phases of the adoption journey and have recommended the use of different channels and messages for each phase. The idea being, an appropriate mix of channels is an important factor to a successful marketing campaign. For example, one agency ran a press advertising campaign in local newspapers and lifestyle magazines. A radio and digital advertising campaign ran alongside this; all contributing to a 65% increase in enquiries on same period in the previous year.

Kindred's Journey Phase:

Role of marketing/communications	Key channels
<b>PHASE ONE: Initial trigger/motivation</b>	
Raise awareness to prompt consideration	Editorial coverage Advertising Friends and family
<b>PHASE TWO: Fact-finding and research</b>	
Inform potential adopters about the process	Websites Online search Information packs Information events
<b>PHASE THREE: Deeper engagement</b>	
Provide information about the realities of adoption	Social media Online forums
<b>PHASE FOUR: The decision</b>	
Reinforce a positive decision	May revisit channels and information

	accessed previously 'Keeping in touch' channels e.g. newsletters
<b>PHASE FIVE: The process and adoption</b>	
Keep updated and provide emotional support	Agency channels Peers
<b>PHASE SIX: After care</b>	
Create advocates for use in future communications	Mentor schemes Networking opportunities

Kindred's findings have been used to benchmark the effectiveness of marketing campaigns in reaching key audiences, tackling their barriers towards adoption and motivating them to engage. Drawing on best practice from Kindred's evidence based research and in line with our regionalised model, Adopt London East will facilitate a coordinated delivery of marketing and recruitment and use a number of communication platforms to appeal to prospective adopters. This will include:

- **Radio advertising:** A call-to-action via a local radio station that matches Adopt London East's target audience.
- **Poster campaigns:** Posters placed in local libraries, community centres and other areas with a community focus. There
- **Direct mail/leafleting:** Distributed at libraries, sports centres, cultural venues, post offices and doctors' surgeries, religious or community groups.
- **Branding:** Adopt London East logo has been developed and this will be followed with a catchy strapline to be used on all marketing materials.
- 
- **Editorial content:** Feature in magazine articles and newspapers.
- **Single door:** A centralised specialist marketing team to receive all recruitment enquiries via the website, email dedicated phone line.
- **Website:** A centralised, digital platform for potential adopters to have access to information, advice and guidance as well as connect with other adopters. Based on best practice research the website will feature:
  - Networking forum for adopters/potential adopters
  - FAQ page
  - Use of visual images for adoption processes
  - Information on upcoming events & training sessions
  - Adoption support tools & techniques
  - Search engine optimisation
  - Engaging Blogs posted by adopters
  - Sophisticated, modern design and layout
  - Bitesize information with easy to understand language
  - Real life stories & experiences of people who have successfully adopted
  - Videos/vlogs
- **Other Social media Channels:** Strong emphasis on digital marketing via social media channels including Facebook, Twitter and YouTube.

- Facebook & Twitter: Interactive platform to share real-life stories and facilitate deeper engagement use of visual images, blogs and hashtags.
- The most used adoption-related hashtags over the past 12 months on social media in the UK are:
- #adoption (208,000 mentions)
- #familylaw (50,900 mentions)
- #adoptionprocess (35,600 mentions)
- #adoptionawareness (12,000 mentions)
- #nationaladoptionweek (3,500 mentions)

YouTube: based on Kindred's recommendations, YouTube can have a key

### 3.9 Proposed Governance Arrangements and Legal Implications

#### Governance Arrangements

The governance structure and arrangements will be comprised of the following forums:

##### 1) ELRAA partnership board

##### Status of the Board

The East London Regional Adoption Agency (ELRAA) Partnership Board is fully accountable to: the London Boroughs of Havering, Barking and Dagenham, Newham and Tower Hamlets.

The ELRAA Partnership Board will report to the London Adoption Board and will co-operatively engage with and work alongside the North, West and South Regional Adoption Governance Boards.

##### Purpose of the Board

The ELRAA Partnership Board will be responsible for providing effective oversight of the partnership agreement and the hosting of adoption services by London Borough of Havering.

The Board will present the Annual Report of the ELRAA Partnership Board to the local authority partner Cabinets, with the support of the Chair and the Vice-Chair of the ELRAA Partnership Board.

The Board will also enable effective overview and support for the collaborative working arrangements between the Voluntary Adoption Agencies (VAA's), Adopters and partner local authorities.

The Board will set and review the strategic objectives of the ELRAA and monitor service delivery of the key priorities of the partnership, that is to:

- Place more children in a timelier way;
- recruit more of the right families for the children waiting, preparing them consistently and well;
- improve the range, accessibility and quality of post adoption support; and
- improve the outcomes for children and families.

##### Roles and responsibilities of the ELRAA Partnership Board

Havering Council will provide the ELRAA Partnership Board with a report on a quarterly basis detailing summary management information as part of the performance monitoring agreement that will include:

- Service delivery performance
- Financial performance

- Audit and assurance activities

Partner Councils will individually provide the ELRAA Partnership Board with a report on a quarterly basis detailing their Council's performance of the co-dependencies that will include:

- Key performance indicators relating to safeguarding pressures and overall children's services demand; and
- pre-court proceedings activities and performance

Partner Councils will produce a joint update on:

- Joint working arrangements
- Inspection readiness

The ELRAA Partnership Board will also:

- Provide a forum to discuss and agree strategic issues relating to the delivery of adoption services.
- Provide a forum to discuss and agree future budget setting
- To provide constructive support and challenge of the adoption system within the North London region, with reference to national best practice / emergent practice, to provide an opportunity for sharing, learning and continuous improvement.
- To engage with national adoption services providers, voluntary adoption agencies and broader stakeholders, to inform regional service development.
- Review and consider reports presented by the ELRAA Advisory Group
- Authorise the commissioning and initiation of new business cases and assess opportunities for future service development.
- Confirm appropriate adjustments to the Contract Baseline regarding Target Performance Levels so that they are aligned with the updated Statistical Neighbour data.
- Consider any changes to the services that arise out of proposals and ensure that they are dealt with as a Variation in accordance with the Partnership Agreement

### Decision Making

Made by consensus between the Director of Children's Services London Borough of Havering and the four Directors of Children's Services from Tower Hamlets, Barking and Dagenham and Newham.

This cohort are primary funding partners and have shared responsibility for performance of adoption services as measured in published statutory performance information and in Ofsted inspection. They therefore form the voting members of the group.

In the event of a continuing dispute, the Board will refer to the formal dispute resolution process detailed within the Joint Partnership Agreement.

### Chair

The Board will be chaired by the Director of Children's Services Havering as host authority.

### Membership

#### Voting representatives

Director of Children's Services - Havering  
 Director of Children's Services – LBBD  
 Director of Children's Services – Newham  
 Director of Children's Services – Tower Hamlets

## Advisory Representatives

Director of Finance – partner authority  
Head of Finance - Havering  
Head of Performance and Business Intelligence - Havering  
VAA representative  
Adopter representative  
HUB representative  
Head of Service - ALE

## 2) Quality assurance group

### Purpose of the Group

The Quality Assurance Group will be responsible for monitoring performance and identifying performance issues at an early stage so that potential issues can be resolved in an efficient and effective manner.

The Quality Assurance Group will be responsible for holding all partners to account in respect of performance outcomes for children and adopters and financial management.

The purpose of the group is:

- Ensure that all work undertaken is compliant with national standards, legislation and inter authority partnership agreements.
- To ensure that all work undertaken is carried out with the best interests of the child/young person at its core.
- To secure and promote good working relationships amongst the ELRAA, partners and stakeholders.
- To ensure effective efficient delivery of the objectives as agreed at the ELRAA Partnership Board.
- To support joint working practices across the ELRAA to improve timeliness and outcomes for children and adopters.
- To compare, contrast and report on the work of other RAAs across the region and nationally.
- To ensure all work is underpinned by best practice recommendations and research findings.
- To ensure discussions/decisions align with those reflected within the London RAA's
- To ensure an annual health check for adoptive families is undertaken

### Roles and responsibilities of the ELRAA Quality Assurance Group

- Ensure appropriate preparation for the ELRAA Partnership Board to enable comprehensive oversight of the delivery of adoption services across East London.
- Receive and review the monthly performance reports from across the four partner agencies on matters such as issues relating to the delivery of services and performance against service standards (including possible future developments).
- Review and consider benchmark reports.
- Review the implications of any recently issued national policy and or guidance
- Review the general inspection readiness of the ELRAA, and monitor progress of actions to address areas of concern.
- Receive and review the ELRAA service delivery risk management matrix, together with identified mitigating actions.



- Report to the ELRAA Partnership Board any future service specific requirements or other significant issues requiring discussion and decision by the ELRAA Partnership Board.
- Scrutinise service quality via:
  1. Anonymised case audits
  2. Findings from service led case audits and staff file audits
  3. Customer feedback (including complaints, concerns and compliments)
  4. Stakeholder feedback including health, schools, courts etc.
  5. Panel recommendations, panel schedules and panel chairs' appraisals
  6. Findings from LA and VAA case reviews
  7. Ofsted inspection outcomes and action plans from other agencies.

### Chair

The Quality Assurance Group will be chaired by - Head of Performance and Business Intelligence – London borough of Havering

### Membership

Members of the quality assurance group include:

- RAA staff reps
- LA officers (e.g. IROs, principal managers etc.)
- Virtual head teacher representatives
- VAA representatives
- Service user representatives
- Other stakeholders including panel chairs, health.

## **3) Annual review meeting**

### Purpose of the Group

The Annual Review Meeting will be an expansion of the ELRAA Partnership Board meeting that will include Cabinet Lead Members. This meeting will act as the primary vehicle to discuss, further develop and agree the strategic and specific objectives for the year ahead.

The Annual Review meeting will be held in accordance with the terms detailed within the Joint Partnership Agreement. Past performance will be reported, with summary of the highlights and lowlights of the year, but the focus will be on supporting the continued development of adoption services within the North London region, whilst ensuring alignment with partner organisations aims, objectives, and budgetary capacity.

### Aims of the Annual Review Meeting

- Assess whether the Partnership Agreement is operating in the most satisfactory manner
- Assess whether the services are being delivered to the Partnership Agreement standard
- Review the Trust's performance of adoption services in the previous Contract Year against the performance indicators and its performance against the annual budget for the previous Contract Year, together with a review of the proposed budget for the following contract year.

- Review the Councils' performance of the co-dependencies that affect the overall performance of adoption services within the East London region.
- Consider any proposals from the Trust or partner Councils relating to possible contract variations, and note any variations agreed at the quarterly ELRAA Partnership Board meetings.
- Agree any proposed changes to the Services Specification, the Financial Mechanism, and the Performance Indicators for the following Contract Year
- Confirm the Contract Sum payable by the respective Councils to the ELRAA for the next contract year

### Ways of Working

- The Annual Review Meeting of the ELRAA Board will be held no later than one full calendar month following the expiry of twelve (12) months from the Services Commencement Date
- Members of the Board will receive papers two weeks before the Annual Review Board meeting

### Chair

The Annual Review Meeting of the ELRAA Board will be chaired by an independent Chair yet to be determined.

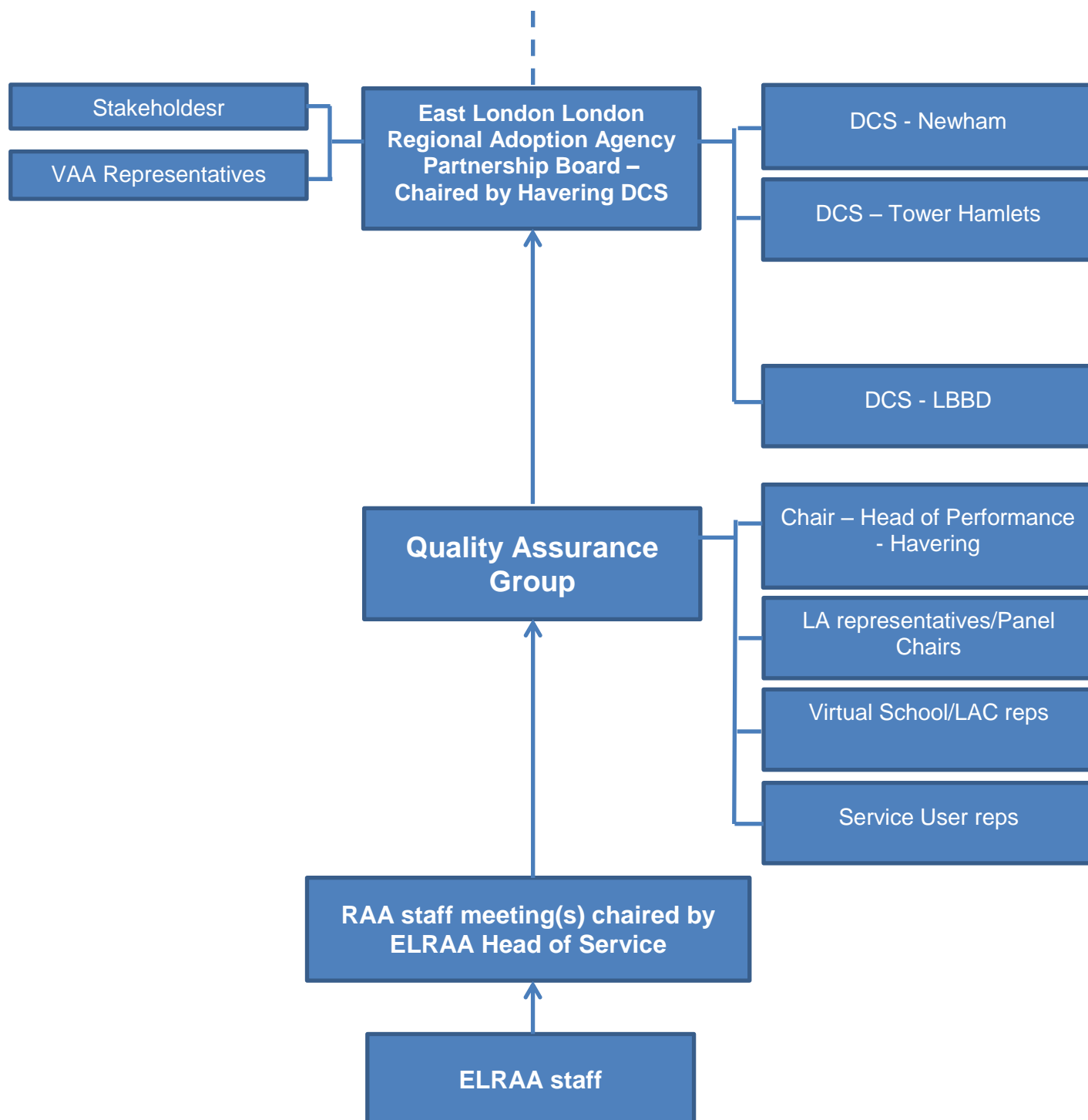
### Membership

Directors of Children's Services (All LA's)  
 Cabinet Lead Member Children's Services (All LA's)  
 Head of Finance - HAvering  
 Head of Performance and Business Intelligence - HAvering  
 VAA Representative  
 Adopter representative  
 HUB representative

#### **4) RAA staff meetings**

There will be a number of internal staff meetings within the RAA that will feed into all aspects of the strategic and quality assurance governance. Exact details of these meetings including, memberships, frequency, purpose and standing agendas, will be co-designed and agreed with staff through the task and finish groups process.

### **Governance structure**



### Partnership working and risk sharing

The RAA governance will be underpinned by clear partnership and risk sharing agreements. It is proposed that the formation of these agreements will be agreed through the project board prior to implementation. The suggested content for the document will likely be made up of but not limited to the following sections

- 1 DEFINITION AND INTERPRETATION
- 2 COMMENCEMENT AND DURATION
- 3 EXTENDING THE INITIAL TERM
- 4 OAWY ARRANGEMENTS
- 5 DELEGATION OF FUNCTIONS
- 6 SERVICES
- 7 ANNUAL OAWY PLAN
- 8 FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

9	OVERSPENDS AND UNDERSPENDS
10	INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS
11	PREMISES
12	ASSETS
13	STAFFING AND PENSIONS
14	OAWY MANAGEMENT GOVERNANCE
15	HOST SUPPORT
16	MANAGEMENT BOARD QUARTERLY REVIEW AND REPORTING
17	ANNUAL REVIEW
18	VARIATIONS
19	STANDARDS
20	HEALTH AND SAFETY
21	EQUALITY DUTIES
22	FREEDOM OF INFORMATION
23	DATA PROTECTION AND INFORMATION SHARING
24	CONFIDENTIALITY
25	AUDIT
26	INSURANCE
27	NOT USED
28	LIABILITIES
29	COMPLAINTS AND INVESTIGATIONS
30	DISPUTE RESOLUTION AND EXIT ARRANGEMENTS
31	TERMINATION AND REVIEW
32	CONSEQUENCES OF EXPIRY AND TERMINATION
33	PUBLICITY
34	NO PARTNERSHIP
35	THIRD PARTY RIGHTS
36	NOTICES
37	SEVERABILITY
38	CHILD PRACTICE REVIEWS OR MULTI AGENCY PROFESSIONAL FORUMS
39	ENTIRE AGREEMENT
40	COUNTERPARTS
41	GOVERNING LAW
42	RECORDS MANAGEMENT
43	THIRD SECTOR PARTNERS

### **A Focus on Risk Sharing**

The partnership agreement will also have a strong focus on risk sharing and financial equitability. It is crucial that no authority stands to benefit or lose out significantly as a result of the new model. The detail of the agreement will include but not be limited to the following:

- Budget setting and review
- How targets are affecting financial contributions
- Financial equitability (at the outset and over time)
- Savings reviews
- How surpluses/savings/efficiencies will be managed, drawn down and reinvested in the model

### **A Focus on Information sharing**

The IT and governance work stream will establish a clear information sharing agreement alongside the IT transition plan. With all RAA staff moving to Havering's IT system, the agreement will focus on how data flows will be managed in the new system to ensure timely and accurate information continues to inform the RAA performance and outcomes framework.

## **3.10 Commissioning arrangements**

There are two commissioned services across the East London footprint:

- PAC-UK
- Spot purchases from Barnardo's' UK

The funding for both of these contracts has been considered as part of the non-staff budget for the RAA. The project team will work with service managers and commissioners during set-up and implementation to review current contracts with a view to extending, modifying or de-commissioning if appropriate.

There are also some longer term considerations around commissioned services across the whole of London. The west London alliance are undertaking an exercise to ascertain what is commissioned across the whole of London with a view to potentially moving to some pan-London commissioning of services. This exercise will be considered alongside the local arrangements during the set-up and implementation of the RAA

## 4 FINANCIAL ASSESSMENT

### Total cost of RAA

The total cost of the RAA will be £1,607,910

This figure is made up of, the following staff budget:

Havering Grade	FTE	TOTAL
G12	1.00	110,000
G10	3.00	234,818
G9	1.00	71,545
G8	12.00	747,659
G4	2.00	65,576
G4	3.00	98,363
		0
	22.0	1,327,961

And a non-staff budget of £297,396 to cover the following:

Staff travel expenses
Subscriptions
Marketing
Comms staffing
Panels
Printing and postage
Adopter training
Medicals
Legal Costs

Adoption Database
Accommodation costs
Hosting costs

## **Interagency placement budget**

Adopt London East (ALE) has clear SMART targets to increase the number of in-house available adopters for all our children (see Outcomes fact sheet). Should the agency achieve the targets set; overall spend on inter-agency placements will reduce considerably. However, some children will require placement with adopters from other agencies and some adopters recruited by ALE may accept children from other Local Authorities generating an income for the agency.

In order to ensure children are placed quickly with the best possible adopters, the agency will operate a policy of priority search for in-house adopters. This search will include horizon scanning for adopters in stage 2 assessment. Should this search not be successful; following sign off from the family finding team manager and children's social work team manager, the search criteria will be immediately widened to include adopters from other agencies.

ALE will maintain a virtual fund for inter-agency income and expenditure. All Local Authorities will agree to a risk sharing matrix. A quarterly financial report will be produced. This will detail all placements made with in-house adopters and all children placed both in-house and in inter-agency placements.

The balance will be apportioned to all agencies according to the overall number of children placed, whether in-house or in inter-agency placements. The partnership board will formulate and equitable procedure for both the redistribution of income and sharing of costs. This formula will be based on a number of criteria, including but not limited to:

- The local authority the children / adopters are from
- Previous years income / costs for each local authority (pre-RAA formation)
- Previous years income / costs for each local authority (post-RAA formation)

As mentioned above, the costs / income from interagency fees is unpredictable, particularly across four local authorities, so the RAA will operate a virtual budget which draws down and apportions money quarterly to the constituent authorities. The business case model aims to ensure that the spend across the region reduces significantly across the first 3 years of implementation

## **Individual contributions**

### How they have been worked out

The project team has worked in consultation with service / HR and finance leads to work out what is currently spent on adoption in each of the local authorities. The challenges with this exercise are that most authorities have split roles across a number of services. (For example, across both fostering and adoption) Also that demand shifts and moves from year to year and so then, will the amount of time each member of staff spends directly on adoption focussed work. For these reasons, we have used the following method and data to work out the total FTE staff and costs for each of the local authorities:

- Taking the total number of FTE staff whose roles include some aspect of adoption focussed work
- Working with service managers to calculate reasonable percentages for the amount of time each staff member spends solely on adoption

- Cross checking the total figures with both the total number of adoptions (per local authority) and the total Lac population (per local authority) to ensure there is financial equitability at the outset
- Calculating the current not staffing budget

It is worth noting again here that demand is not completely predictable so total equitability is not possible. The mitigation for this will be covered by the risk sharing and partnership agreements (sections below), which will ensure that the necessary governance is put in place to make sure no authority loses out or benefits in relation to another.

#### The individual contributions

The table below sets out the proposed individual total contributions from each local authority. This is made up of the current staffing contribution (above) and the current non staffing budget for each local authority. The figures also take into account the fact that the head of service is non-cashable.

<u>Local Authority</u>	<u>Contribution to RAA</u>
Havering	£313,929
Tower Hamlets	£284,566
LBBD	£392,646
Newham	£407,042
Total	£1,398,183

#### **Rationale for budget model**

The Regionalisation Demonstrator projects developed a number of budget models using a variety of assumptions and processes. The most consistently used model worked from actual spend as this is already budgeted within each LA towards budgets based on service delivery over 3 to 5 years. This model also allows performance in each Authority to develop to the best prior to full remodelling of budgets. As numbers of children adopted are low and unit costs high, this has a radical effect on unit costs per adoption.

Each Local Authority has raised concerns about cross subsidy of other Authorities.

Unit costs may be modelled on numbers of children placed for adoption or on LAC population. The former figure links costs more closely to delivery but is subject to large scale change as performance improves. The latter gives a more stable base rate.

#### Unit costs per child placed for adoption

Current costs per each child placed vary considerably. Tower Hamlets have seen a considerable rise in numbers of children placed; the unit cost per child placed is 22.7K.

#### Unit costs per LAC population

The difference in unit costs is low when measured by LAC population with Havering being the highest at £1433. Barking and Dagenham and Tower Hamlets both achieve £1220.

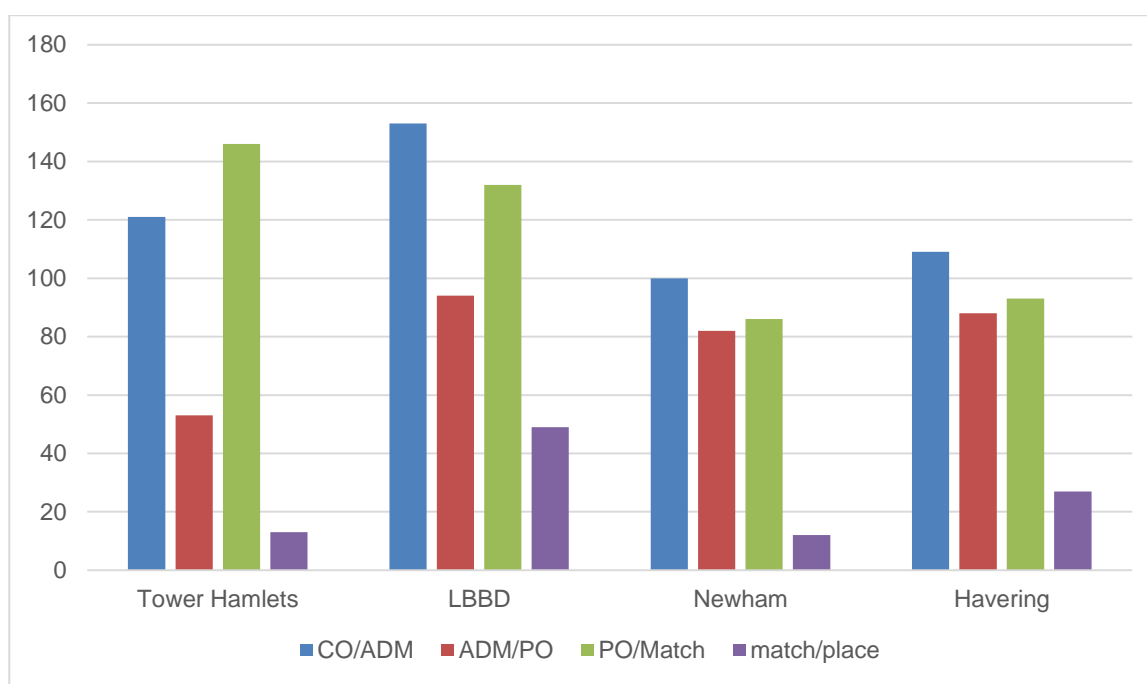
#### **The Shortfall**

- The total shortfall between the current contributions and the proposed RAA budget is £209,727
- It is important to note that this is the maximum possible shortfall between current budgets and the proposed RAA budgets as salaries have been costed at the highest possible spinal point. As such, the RAA partnership board will concentrate on partnership and risk sharing agreements to ensure that any underspend and savings are redistributed equitably among its member local authorities
- This business case sets out a “highest possible cost” funding model and ensures that the amount spent on the model in years 1,2 and 3 can be no more than the stated figure

- As such, the outline cost of the model is the same for years 1,2 and 3, in the knowledge that the spend will definitely be lower than the agreed amount
- As shown above; each authority will make an upfront extra commitment of 15% of their total budget to fund the shortfall made up by the non-cashable elements of their budgets and the extra costs of the RAA in year 1
- The methodology for meeting this shortfall is based on reducing the number of interagency placement fees paid out for children in the RAA footprint.
- A conservative estimate of 7 (£217k at a cost of 31k per placement) additional placements made in house would comfortably cover the costs of the shortfall between the current and future budgets
- The RAA performance targets also aim to reduce interagency placements by a total of 16 by year 3 at a potential cost saving of £496k
- There is also significant scope for increasing income from providing East London RAA adopters to other RAA's
- The risk sharing and partnership agreements (above) will set out clear methodologies for budget setting and benefits (financial and other) sharing as a result of the RAA achieving its targets.
- Further savings against Children in Care budgets by each Local Authority through improved rates of leaving care for adoption and improved timeliness of placement

## **Potential savings**

### **Impact of timeliness on Value for Money**



Savings in Local Authority may be made through development of efficient and effective systems. If all services are benchmarked against the best performing Local Authority in the ALE region the number of days a child is in care is reduced by the following amounts.

	<b>Tower Hamlets</b>	<b>LBBD</b>	<b>Newham</b>	<b>Havering</b>	<b>Total</b>
CO/ADM	21	53	0	9	<b>97</b>
ADM/PO	45	41	73	80	<b>239</b>
PO/Match	60	46	0	7	<b>124</b>
Match/Place	4	15	4	19	<b>42</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>502</b>



### Calculation assumptions

- All ALE authorities perform well in respect of hard to place dimensions impact of these dimensions has not therefore been separately calculated
- The highest performing authority in the pathways most affected by placement of hard to place children has one of the highest rates of leaving care for adoption and one of the highest rates of placement of hard to place children. The potential impact of rates of leaving care on timeliness is therefore minimised
- As numbers are low: placement of individual children may have a disproportionate effect on figures, an assumption has therefore been made of 50% improvement for all Local Authorities
- An average daily cost of £80 per child in care has been used for calculation purposes

Savings Per Local Authority	
Tower Hamlets	£5,200
LBBD	£6,200
Newham	£3,800
Havering	£4,600
<b>Total</b>	<b>£20,800</b>

### Rates of Leaving care for adoption

Current rates of leaving care for adoption are low across all ALE authorities

Tower Hamlets, followed by Newham and LBBD have higher rates than Havering. As LBBD has a higher LAC population the overall improvement opportunities are potentially higher in numbers

	Placed 2017/18	Improvement to best	Gain
Havering	6	13	7
Tower Hamlets	18	18	0
LBBD	13	22	9
Newham	16	21	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>32</b>

### Calculation assumptions

- The in-year placement costs of a child in care roughly equate to costs of an adoptive placement should this be purchased through an inter-agency agreement.
- Assumption of 50% improvement in the number of placements made
- Assumption that 50% of placements are externally purchased (see adopter recruitment performance in outcomes tracker)
- Lifetime in care is conservatively estimated on an assumption that the child is 3 when adopted and care costs will remain the same

	<b>50)% gain (rounded down</b>	<b>Savings in year</b>	<b>Lifetime savings</b>
Havering	3	45K	40,500K
Tower Hamlets	0	0K	0K
LBBD	4	60K	54,000K
Newham	2	30K	27,000K
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>210K</b>	<b>189,000K</b>

NB: this is based on improvement to the best in ALE Authorities, further improvement to national averages will result in further cost savings for all

### Conclusion

All Local Authorities place fewer children from care than national averages. It is likely that ALE authorities will continue to place fewer children due to local demographics and effective use of SGO with extended families, however there are clear indications that the East London court will work with Local Authorities to ensure more children are granted a placement order.

There are considerable differences in timeliness across the Local Authorities. As would be expected the Local Authorities who place more children take longer on average, however some aspects of positive practice do emerge and these will be explored further in the task and finish groups.

Interestingly the impact of placement of children from typically hard to place groups is lower than seen in other areas. This indicates a commitment to strive for placement, especially of children from BME populations where average timescales fall. It may also indicate the effect of the East London Courts on granting of placement orders for children seen to be too hard to place. This requires further exploration but the low rate of children over 5 being placed (and only when in a sibling group) may be indicative of this.

## 5 IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

Adopt London East - Regionalisation Plan										
Month	Sep-18	Oct-18	Nov-18	Dec-18	Jan-19	Feb-19	Mar-19	Apr-19	May-19	Jun-19
Staff engagement event (1)										
Business case signed off by RAA board										
Cabinet meetings & decisions for all councils										
Staff task & finish groups										
Staff engagement event (2)										
Formal consultation with unions and staff										
Recruitment of permanent HoS										
Staff transfer procedure										
All other set up procedures – IT systems, finance, partnership and risk sharing agreements										
Regionalised Service is in place										



## **Pan-London RAA Finance and Risk Sharing**

### **Executive board update**

There are clearly a number of financial challenges and risks associated with the regionalisation of adoption services. In a climate of varied performance, constantly moving demand and the need to demonstrate value for money and financial equitability, this briefing seeks to address some of those key potential issues and provide a set of pan-London principles to mitigate any risks at the outset of the implementation of the regionalised model.

The table below sets out a list of key issues alongside explanations and potential mitigating actions / principles for review by the executive:

<b><u>Risk</u></b>	<b><u>Explanation</u></b>	<b><u>Mitigation(s) / Principle(s)</u></b>
Redundancy costs	There is a risk that all redundancy costs (post-implementation) fall to the host authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The RAA partnerships agree that all future redundancy costs are split equitably among the constituent local authorities</li> <li>• Any redundancy costs (pre-implementation) remain with the originating local authority</li> </ul>
Current assets (adopters)	Each local authority will join an RAA with a pool of adopters recruited by that local authority. There is a risk that the income generated by those adopters becomes RAA income and is therefore being apportioned equally among the constituent local authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any income generated through assets (adopters) brought into the model will be able to be drawn down by the local authority that recruited them</li> <li>• Beyond implementation (or the date that joint recruitment commences) all adopters will be considered RAA assets. The income generated from these adopters will remain with the RAA and discussed by the partnership as to how the money is best used / apportioned</li> </ul>
Paying Interagency fees	There is a risk that the RAA spend on interagency fees is apportioned equally across all local authorities. There could be a situation where a high % of the children come from a single	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The RAA's will operate a sliding scale formula for how interagency costs are apportioned.</li> <li>• It will take into account the originating borough of the child</li> <li>• It will also take into account the previous year's spend on interagency placements</li> <li>• The partnership agreements will</li> </ul>

	borough but the costs are split equally.	work these formulae up in consultation with local project boards and the executive
Unpredictable demand	Performance suggests that adoption demand is unpredictable. There is a risk that the current funding may not be enough if there is a spike in demand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The RAA will have tolerances for capacity across the region and for each local authority based on a target unit cost per child placed</li> <li>• The partnership agreements will agree the process for how extra funding can be drawn down to cope with rising demand</li> <li>• Should the RAA's meet their performance targets, the associated savings could be used as a buffer</li> <li>• Income generated from RAA adopters could also be used as a buffer</li> <li>• While budgets have been set for the first three years, each RAA will operate a yearly budget review and setting exercise to ensure flexibility</li> <li>• The RAA's will aim to become demand led organisations by the end of year 3 at which point, future budgets will be based on unit costs and likely future demand</li> </ul>

# Equality & Health Impact Assessment (EqHIA)

## Document control

<b>Title of activity:</b>	<i>Development of Adopt London East: Regional Adoption service.</i>
<b>Lead officer:</b>	<i>Sue May: Regionalisation Practice Lead</i>
<b>Approved by:</b>	<i>Robert Smith</i>
<b>Date completed:</b>	<i>22/10/18</i>
<b>Scheduled date for review:</b>	<i>If applicable. Please provide a reason if it does not need to be reviewed.</i>

Please note that the Corporate Policy & Diversity and Public Health teams require at least **5 working days** to provide advice on EqHIAs.

<b>Did you seek advice from the Corporate Policy &amp; Diversity team?</b>	Yes
<b>Did you seek advice from the Public Health team?</b>	Yes
<b>Does the EqHIA contain any confidential or exempt information that would prevent you publishing it on the Council's website?</b>	Yes

Please note that EqHIAs are **public** documents and must be made available on the Council's [EqHIA webpage](#).

**Please submit the completed form via e-mail to [EqHIA@haverling.gov.uk](mailto:EqHIA@haverling.gov.uk) thank you.**

# 1. Equality & Health Impact Assessment Checklist

Please complete the following checklist to determine whether or not you will need to complete an EqHIA and ensure you keep this section for your audit trail. If you have any questions, please contact [EqHIA@haverling.gov.uk](mailto:EqHIA@haverling.gov.uk) for advice from either the Corporate Diversity or Public Health teams. Please refer to the Guidance in Appendix 1 on how to complete this form.

## About your activity

1	Title of activity	<i>Development of Adopt London East: Regional Adoption Service</i>		
2	Type of activity	<i>Development of a new service resulting in a change in change in the current adoption service</i>  <i>Note: This EqHIA relates only to impact on adoptive families. A separate EqHIA will be undertaken for affected staff</i>		
3	Scope of activity	<i>Development of an integrated adoption service; hosted by Havering on behalf of Tower Hamlets, Newham, London Borough of Barking and Dagenham and Waltham Forest.</i>		
4a	Are you changing, introducing a new, or removing a service, policy, strategy or function?	Yes	If the answer to <u>any</u> of these questions is 'YES', please continue to question 5.	If the answer to <u>all</u> of the questions (4a, 4b & 4c) is 'NO', please go to question 6.
4b	Does this activity have the potential to impact (either positively or negatively) upon people (9 protected characteristics)?	Yes		
4c	Does the activity have the potential to impact (either positively or negatively) upon any factors which determine people's health and wellbeing?	Yes		
5	If you answered YES:	<b>Please complete the EqHIA in Section 2 of this document.</b> Please see Appendix 1 for Guidance.		
6	If you answered NO:	<i>Please provide a clear and robust explanation on why your activity does not require an EqHIA. This is essential in case the activity is challenged under the Equality Act 2010.</i>  <i>Please keep this checklist for your audit trail.</i>		

Completed by:	<i>Sue May: Practice Lead</i>
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**Date:**

22/10/18

## 2. The EqHIA – How will the strategy, policy, plan, procedure and/or service impact on people?

### Background/context:

In March 2016, the government announced changes to the delivery of adoption services setting a clear direction that all local authorities' adoption services must be delivered on a regionalised basis by 2020. This followed a range of national policy changes since 2012, including the 2015 'Regionalising Adoption' paper by the DfE that sought improvements in adoption performance. Following the general election in June 2017, the Minister of State for Children and Families reaffirmed commitment to this policy. In March 2018, the DfE commenced the legislation that allows them to direct a local authority into a RAA if no progress is made.

The purpose of regionalisation is to achieve the following outcomes:

- Increase the number of children adopted
- Reduce the length of time children wait to be adopted
- Improve post-adoption support services to families who have adopted children from care
- Reduce the number of agencies that provide adoption services thereby improving efficiency & effectiveness.

Currently adoption services in East London are delivered in small teams, often integrated with other permanence options. The rate of children leaving care for adoption and the number of adopters recruited are both lower than national comparators and expected standards. Adoption support services are underdeveloped and often delivered by one worker operating in isolation. Combining services into one larger agency allows for greater focus on adoption activities, gives more scope for adopter recruitment and placement of children across a larger geographical area and development of a shared adoption support service with a clear core offer.

A new East London Regional Adoption Agency (RAA) will be created. Havering will host a combined adoption service for the five East London Boroughs of Havering, Tower Hamlets, Newham, Barking and Dagenham and Waltham Forest. These agencies wish to build on the success of their existing services to improve performance in meeting the needs of children who require permanence through adoption, by bringing together the best practice from each authority within the RAA. This forms part of an overarching project to develop four RAAs across London.

The development project is overseen by a board comprising of ADCS from all five Boroughs and chaired by the Havering Director of Children's Services. The service will be developed using the combined adoption budgets of all five Boroughs.

Detail of the service design and delivery will be developed with our staff and adopters through thematic practice development sessions and with reference to best practice guidance.

*\*Expand box as required*

### Who will be affected by the activity?

Employees: who will transfer into Havering from other East London Boroughs  
Adopters and adopted children and adults

**Note this EqHIA only relates to adopters and adopted children. A further separate Eq HIA will be completed in respect of employees as part of the HR processes**

### Protected Characteristic - Age: Consider the full range of age groups

Please tick (✓)  
the relevant box:

**Positive**

x

**Neutral**

**Negative**

#### Overall impact:

Research evidences that children adopted over the age of 4, who have suffered trauma are more likely to face an adoption breakdown in their teenage years (see below). The service aims to improve timeliness of adoption, develop an early permanence program where children may be placed directly with adoptive parents (avoiding the trauma of additional separation from foster carers) and provide an improved adoption support service. The service will provide direct support to adopted teens who are identified to be the most vulnerable group.

*\*Expand box as required*

#### Evidence:

Researchers from the University of Bristol undertook a large scale survey on adoptive families over a 12 year period. They identified that in 3.2% of adoptions the children leave the family home prematurely (known as disruption). Most adoptions disrupt when the child reaches teenage years. Disruptions are 10 times more likely for a teenager than a child under 4. Although the majority of placements disrupt in teenage years children placed over the age of 4 were significantly more likely to form part of this group

CORAM have undertaken a review of early permanence use in newly forms regional agencies. All agencies report improved use of early permanence and positive engagement with adoptive families

*\*Expand box as required*

**Sources used:**

Beyond the Adoption Order; challenges, intervention, disruption - Hadley Centre at the University of Bristol (April 2014)

Early Permanence in the Regional Adoption Agencies  
May 2018 - CORAM

*\*Expand box as required*

**Protected Characteristic - Disability:** Consider the full range of disabilities; including physical mental, sensory and progressive conditions

Please tick (✓)  
the relevant box:

**Positive**

x

**Overall impact:**

Adopters and adopted children: Performance in the last year across all ALE London boroughs in terms of recruitment of adopters and placement of children with a disability was low (see evidence)

**Neutral**

**Negative**

The BAAF Briefing paper: *Adoption of disabled children begins with the premise that 'all children, including those with impairments, have a right to be seen as unique individuals. They also have a right to a family – and to make that more likely, potential families must be shown through every means possible that each child is more than a label or diagnosis (Cousins 2009)*

Regionalisation of the service will provide opportunities to effectively target communication, to ensure prospective adopters with a disability understand the service positively recognizes the contribution adopters with a disability have to offer.

Similarly the service will use the larger pool of available adopters and targeted matching to ensure children with a disability are adopted where this is the care plan.

*\*Expand box as required*

**Evidence:**

All Local Authorities are required to submit a return to the Adoption Leadership Board detailing performance. The returns made by each ALE Local Authority have been analysed.

- No ALE Local Authority recruited an adopter with a recorded disability
- Only 3 children with a disability were placed across ALE Local Authorities (2 in one Local Authority)

National statistics from the ALB return indicate that disabled children are identified as hard to place and placement matches take longer. Data on placement of children with a disability is not collated through the adoption scorecard but the ALB return indicates that across all England 4.5% of children waiting for an adoptive placement have an identified disability. ALE Local Authorities report 5.8% children with a disability waiting.

Research (BAAF as below) identifies that children with a learning disability are less likely to become adopted. Children with a physical ability are more likely to become adopted at an older age by their foster carers

*\*Expand box as required*

#### **Sources used:**

ALB returns and performance analysis

The Adoption of disabled children – BAAF Briefing paper

*\*Expand box as required*

#### **Protected Characteristic - Sex/gender: Consider both men and women**

*Please tick (✓)  
the relevant box:*

**Positive**

**x**

#### **Overall impact:**

The service will ensure all members of the community are aware they can apply for an assessment as to their suitability to adopt a child

**Neutral**

The service will also ensure family finding and matching is streamlined and benefits from a wider adopter pool

**Negative**

*\*Expand box as required*

#### **Evidence:**

Adopters: In 2017/18 ALE Local Authorities made placements of children with 36 in-house approved adopters. Of these, 26 were heterosexual couples, one lesbian couple and one gay male couple. 8 were single female adopters no single male adopter had a child placed.

Children: Nationally boys over the age of 4 are considered to be harder to place than girls. This is also evidenced as a marginal factor in ALE Local Authorities

Adoption register Statistics evidence that although a similar number of boys and girls are referred to the adoption register boys wait longer for a match: At year end 2017; 56% of children waiting to be matched were boys and 44% of children waiting were girls

*\*Expand box as required*

#### **Sources used:**

ALE Local Authorities ALB data returns and analysis

Adoption Register Statistics

*\*Expand box as required*

**Protected Characteristic - Ethnicity/race:** Consider the impact on different ethnic groups and nationalities

Please tick (✓) the relevant box:

<b>Positive</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Neutral</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Negative</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Overall impact:**

ALE Local Authorities have a high rate of looked after children from local BME communities. Children from BME Communities are identified to be harder to place for adoption.

The larger regional agency will use the combined resources from all agencies to provide focused recruitment of adopters from local BME communities to meet the identified needs of children waiting for adoption

*\*Expand box as required*

**Evidence:**

2017/18 data from the unpublished ALB data returns indicates that the percentage of children placed for adoption from BME populations varies from 75% in Newham and Waltham Forest with LBBD and Tower Hamlets both reporting approximately 50% to 17% (one child) in Havering. Children from BME populations are typically seen to be harder to place.

Analysis of the above information shows in East London this is not the case. All authorities except Tower Hamlets show shorter timescales for PO to Match. In the case of Tower Hamlets a single lengthy search for a BME child has had a disproportionate effect.

The latest published Adoption scorecard indicates that although overall performance in numbers of children placed from BME populations is good in this region, the percentage of children from BME populations who leave care for adoption remains low due to the high numbers of children from BME populations who are looked after. The England average of 8% is only achieved by Waltham Forest with all other ALE Local Authorities achieving 5 or 6%

The number of adopters from BME populations has been collated from all family types. For the purposes of this exercise, if either adopter in a couple is identified as BME the adoptive family has been recorded as BME. The Percentage of adopters from BME populations varies from 75% in Tower Hamlets and 66% in Waltham Forest to 25% in Havering and 17% in LBBD. No adopters were identified as having a disability. This variability is not in line with BME populations in ALE Local Authorities and although further analysis is required, the BME adopters recruited do not match with predominant groups in the local community. It is likely that improved targeted recruitment could improve the

adopter base

Statistics suggest it is more difficult to place children from ethnic minority groups. Figures from the National Adoption Register show that, in 2008, 243 children from ethnic minorities were referred but there were only nine adopters. – Community Care

A number of agencies have developed best practice guidance in working with local communities.

*\*Expand box as required*

**Sources used:**

ALB Data returns – performance information and analysis

Community Care – Building success in transracial placements

Best practice examples: PACT UK; Adopt4children

*\*Expand box as required*

Protected Characteristic - Religion/faith: Consider people from different religions or beliefs including those with no religion or belief		
Please tick (✓) the relevant box:		<b>Overall impact:</b>
<b>Positive</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	As Above people of all religion and faiths and none are welcome to apply to adopt. Heterosexual couples from Christian faith are over represented in the adoption community, however people from other local faith communities are under-represented.
<b>Neutral</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Negative</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		The service will aim to engage with local faith communities in order to ensure adoption is fully understood
<i>*Expand box as required</i>		
<b>Evidence:</b>		
<p>Parents have a right to request their child is brought up in their chosen faith and all agencies must take this into account when family finding. This can lead to delay</p> <p>As above best practice exemplars evidence the value of working with local communities and faith groups</p>		
<i>*Expand box as required</i>		

**Sources used:**

The Adoption and Children Act 2005

Adoption: giving due weight to birth parents' religious preferences: The Guardian

ALB Statistical returns

*\*Expand box as required*

**Protected Characteristic - Sexual orientation:** Consider people who are heterosexual, lesbian, gay or bisexual

Please tick (✓)  
the relevant box:

**Positive**

x

**Neutral**

**Negative**

**Overall impact:**

Analysis of adopters recruited shows LGBT adopters are currently under-represented and the service will aim to promote adoption within the LGBT community.

Children who are LGBT will benefit from a wider pool of adopter skill and knowledge and from improved adoption support

*\*Expand box as required*

**Evidence:**

Analysis of the 2017/18 unpublished ALB returns from all ALE Local Authorities identified that all Local Authorities primarily recruited adopters who were a heterosexual couple. The next most common adopter type was single female heterosexual. Only two same sex couples were recruited, one gay and one lesbian. No single males, single gay men or single lesbian women were recruited. Gay and Lesbian people have been identified as a potential target market for adoption and recruitment in this area appears to be underdeveloped across ALE authorities.

In total 36 ALE Local Authority recruited adopters had a child placed in 2017/18. This included 2 same sex couples (5.5%)

Adoptions by same-sex couples in England, Scotland and Wales – 2016/2017 (New Family Social – Research 2018)

- **England** – In this period there were 420 adoptions to same-sex couples, out of 4,350 adoptions in total. This represents 9.7 per cent of all adoptions that year, or **1 in 10**.

Several studies of LGBT adopters have been undertaken as cited below. All conclude that LGBT adopters are under-represented and are an un-tapped resource. Currently only one Local Authority referenced any work with New Family Social an LGBT specialist resource.

Studies of LGBT adoptive families have evidenced no significant difference in outcomes for children other than some evidence of a higher level of understanding of the impact of difference in LGBT adopters

*\*Expand box as required*

**Sources used:**

ALB Data returns and analysis

Gay Lesbian and Heterosexual Adoptive Families (BAAF with Cambridge University) 2013

The recruitment, assessment, support and supervision of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender foster carers An international literature review Helen Cosis Brown, Judy Sebba and Nikki Luke – Rees Centre 2015

New Family Social Research 2018

*\*Expand box as required*

**Protected Characteristic - Gender reassignment:** Consider people who are seeking, undergoing or have received gender reassignment surgery, as well as people whose gender identity is different from their gender at birth

*Please tick (✓)  
the relevant box:*

**Positive**

☒

**Neutral**

☐

**Negative**

☐

**Overall impact:**

There is little current research into transgendered children but they are known to face challenge in our communities. They require knowledgeable and empathic support from adopters willing to accept their chosen identity

The new service aims to improve adoption support to adoptive families

Currently there are no collated statistics on transgendered people or adopters but no adopter in ALE Local Authorities has been identified as transgender

*\*Expand box as required*



**Evidence:**

At present, there is no official estimate of the trans population. The England/Wales Census and Scottish Census have not asked if people identify as trans and do not plan to include such a question in 2011. No major Government or administrative surveys collect data on trans people. Existing studies estimate the number of trans people in the UK to be between around 65,000 (Johnson, 2001, p. 7) and around 300,000<sup>i</sup> (GIREs, 2008b). The absence of an official estimate makes it impossible to establish the level of inequality, discrimination or exclusion that trans people have experienced in many areas.

There is currently little longitudinal research into Transgender children and this is an emerging field. It is however widely understood that Transgender children often recognize their difference from a very early age. Living in a society in which all people are described as either male or female brings profound challenge. Adoptive children who are challenging gender norms need support from adopters capable of understanding their world and responding to their needs.

*\*Expand box as required*

**Sources used:**

Equalities Commission – Trans Research Review 2009  
CPS Gender Equality Guidance – February 2015  
New Family Social

*\*Expand box as required*

**Protected Characteristic - Marriage/civil partnership:** Consider people in a marriage or civil partnership

*Please tick (✓)  
the relevant box:*

<b>Positive</b>	
<b>Neutral</b>	<b>x</b>
<b>Negative</b>	

**Overall impact:**

All adoption services currently operate a policy of promotion of all family types including people living within a marriage or civil partnership and this policy will continue.

*\*Expand box as required*

**Evidence:**

*\*Expand box as required*

<b>Sources used:</b>	<i>*Expand box as required</i>
----------------------	--------------------------------

<b>Protected Characteristic - Pregnancy, maternity and paternity:</b> Consider those who are pregnant and those who are undertaking maternity or paternity leave		
<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>		<b>Overall impact:</b>
<b>Positive</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Adopters have statutory rights to adoption leave. These are protected within regulation and adopters are advised of their rights by their adoption social worker. This practice will continue
<b>Neutral</b>		
<b>Negative</b>		Improved adoption support will allow the service to be more pro-active in working with key employers on adoption friendly practice and on assisting individual adopters to discuss family friendly working practice with their employer
<i>*Expand box as required</i>		

<b>Evidence:</b>
<p>Policies and procedures in all Local Authorities reflect Government Guidance</p> <p>Statutory maternity, paternity and adoption rights in the UK apply to parents both before and after birth or adoption. The rights provide parents with the time needed to maintain family responsibilities while keeping their right to return to work. Fathers, adoptive parents and same-sex partners are entitled to paternity or maternity leave, adoption and shared parental leave. (CIPD Guidance)</p> <p>Where family and adoptive family friendly practices have been instituted companies have reported higher employee satisfaction, greater retention and no loss of productivity (JRT)</p>
<i>*Expand box as required</i>

<b>Sources used:</b>
<p>Statutory Pay and Leave: AND Employer Guide: Gov.UK</p> <p>CIPD guidance</p> <p>Putting family-friendly working policies into practice Sue Bond, Jeff Hyman, Juliette Summers and Sarah Wise - JRT Feb 2002</p>
<i>*Expand box as required</i>

<b>Socio-economic status:</b> Consider those who are from low income or financially excluded backgrounds		
Please tick (✓) the relevant box:		<b>Overall impact:</b>  Adopters on a low income are able to claim the same benefits as any other parent. Some may also be able to claim additional adoption allowances. Decision making regarding adoption allowances will initially remain with each Local Authority   <i>*Expand box as required</i>
Positive		
Neutral	X	
Negative		
<b>Evidence:</b>  ALE Business case – states Adoption allowances will remain within each Local Authority  <i>*Expand box as required</i>		
<b>Sources used:</b>  ALE Business case  <i>*Expand box as required</i>		

<b>Health &amp; Wellbeing Impact:</b> Consider both short and long-term impacts of the activity on a person's physical and mental health, particularly for disadvantaged, vulnerable or at-risk groups. Can health and wellbeing be positively promoted through this activity? Please use the Health and Wellbeing Impact Tool in Appendix 2 to help you answer this question.		
Please tick (✓) all the relevant boxes that apply:		<b>Overall impact:</b>  Regionalisation of adoption will bring together a single integrated workforce which will provide opportunities to develop a consistent core offer and use the skills of the existing workforce for the benefit of all. A coordinated response will allow the service to work with partners including those in the health sector to improve services for adoptive families  <i>*Expand box as required</i>  <b>Do you consider that a more in-depth HIA is required as a result of this brief assessment?</b> Please tick (✓) the relevant box  <div style="text-align: right;"><b>No</b>    ●</div>
Positive	X	
Neutral		
Negative		
<b>Evidence:</b>  Consultation with adoptive parents in the ALE area has been undertaken by 'We are Family' This evidenced a high degree of dissatisfaction with adoption support services. This finding has been replicated nationally and is reflected in the BAAF research overview (below)		

There are currently no formal evaluations of support provided by the newly formed regional adoption agencies. Individual agencies, however report higher levels of adopter satisfaction

The Health and Well-being impact tool has been completed to ensure all potential impacts are fully understood and assessed.

Adoption is a positive choice made by potential adoptive parents after careful consideration of all factors involved. All potential adoptive parents undertake preparation training and have a full assessment undertaken by a specialist social worker. This assessment supports them to explore all potential impacts on their life.

The positive impact on family life and social circumstances through adoption of a much wanted child is the prime motivator for prospective adopters. The potential challenges of supporting a child who may have suffered trauma into a new 'forever family' are fully explored in assessment. Training, guidance and adoption support is provided from the point of assessment to placement and until the child reaches 18 or beyond.

There is a potential negative effect on education or employment opportunities. The assessment includes consideration of the adoptive families financial stability. This includes potential impacts on employment opportunities through parental leave and choices to reduce or cease work. Adoptive children may need more support in the early years and this is also fully explored. Some financial support is available for adoptive families who adopt children with more complex needs.

*\*Expand box as required*

#### **Sources used:**

Adoption for looked after children: messages from research: BAAF 2012

*\*Expand box as required*

### 3. Outcome of the Assessment

The EqHIA assessment is intended to be used as an improvement tool to make sure the activity maximises the positive impacts and eliminates or minimises the negative impacts. The possible outcomes of the assessment are listed below and what the next steps to take are:

Please tick (✓) what the overall outcome of your assessment was:

	1. The EqHIA identified <u>no significant concerns</u> OR the identified <u>negative concerns</u> have already been <u>addressed</u>	➔	<b>Proceed with implementation</b> of your activity
	2. The EqHIA identified some <u>negative impact</u> which still needs <u>to be addressed</u>	➔	<b>COMPLETE SECTION 4:</b> <b>Complete action plan</b> and finalise the EqHIA
	3. The EqHIA identified some <u>major concerns</u> and showed that it is <u>impossible to diminish negative impacts</u> from the activity to an acceptable or even lawful level	➔	<b>Stop and remove</b> the activity or <b>revise</b> the activity <b>thoroughly</b> . <b>Complete an EqHIA on the revised proposal.</b>

## 4. Action Plan

The real value of completing an EqHIA comes from the identifying the actions that can be taken to eliminate/minimise negative impacts and enhance/optimize positive impacts. In this section you should list the specific actions that set out how you will address any negative equality and health & wellbeing impacts you have identified in this assessment. Please ensure that your action plan is: more than just a list of proposals and good intentions; sets ambitious yet achievable outcomes and timescales; and is clear about resource implications.

Protected characteristic / health & wellbeing impact	Identified Negative or Positive impact	Recommended actions to mitigate Negative impact* or further promote Positive impact	Outcomes and monitoring**	Timescale	Lead officer

**Add further rows as necessary**

\* You should include details of any future consultations and any actions to be undertaken to mitigate negative impacts

\*\* Monitoring: You should state how the impact (positive or negative) will be monitored; what outcome measures will be used; the known (or likely) data source for outcome measurements; how regularly it will be monitored; and who will be monitoring it (if this is different from the lead officer).

## 5. Review

In this section you should identify how frequently the EqHIA will be reviewed; the date for next review; and who will be reviewing it.

**Review:**

**Scheduled date of review:**

**Lead Officer conducting the review:**

*\*Expand box as required*

**Please submit the completed form via e-mail to [EqHIA@havering.gov.uk](mailto:EqHIA@havering.gov.uk) thank you.**

# Appendix 1. Guidance on Undertaking an EqHIA

**This Guidance can be deleted prior to publication.**

## What is it?

The Equality & Health Impact Assessment (EqHIA) is a tool to ensure that your activity meets the needs of individuals and groups that use your service, whilst at the same time ensuring a person's chance of leading a healthy life is the same wherever they live and whoever they are. We want to ensure that the activities of the Council are 'fit for purpose' and meet the needs of Havering's increasingly diverse communities and employees. This robust and systematic EqHIA process ensures that any potential detrimental effects or discrimination is identified, removed, or mitigated and positive impacts are enhanced.

## When to Assess:

An EqHIA should be carried out when you are changing, removing or introducing a new service, policy, strategy or function; for simplicity, these are referred to as an "activity" throughout this document. It is best to conduct the assessment as early as possible in the decision-making process.

### Guidance: Equality & Health Impact Assessment Checklist

The Checklist in Section 1 asks the key questions,

**4a) Are you changing, introducing a new, or removing a service, policy, strategy or function?**

**4b) Does this activity (policy/strategy/service/decision) have the potential to impact (either positively or negatively) upon people (9 protected characteristics)?**

**4c) Does this activity (policy/strategy/service/decision) have the potential to impact (either positively or negatively) upon any factors which determine people's health and wellbeing?**

- If the answer to ANY of the questions 4a, 4b or 4c of the Checklist is 'YES' then you must carry out an assessment. e.g. Proposed changes to Contact Centre Opening Hours  
'YES' = you need to carry out an EqHIA
- If the answer to ALL of the questions, 4a or 4b of the Checklist is NO, then you do not need to carry out an EqHIA assessment. e.g. Quarterly Performance Report  
'NO' = you DO NOT need to carry out an EqHIA. Please provide a clear explanation as to why you consider an EqHIA is not required for your activity.

## Using the Checklist

The assessment should take into account all the potential impacts of the proposed activity, be it a major financial decision, or a seemingly simple policy change. Considering and completing this EqHIA will ensure that all Council plans, strategies, policies, procedures, services or other activity comply with relevant statutory obligations and responsibilities. In particular it helps the Council to meet its legal obligation under the [Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty](#) and its public health duties under the [Health and Social Care Act 2012](#).



## Having Due Regard

To have due regard means that in making decisions and in its other day-to-day activities, the Council must consciously consider the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity between different groups
- Foster good relations between different groups
- Reduce inequalities in health outcomes

## Combining Equality and Health Impact Assessment:

[Equality Impact Assessments \(EIAs\)](#) provide a systematic way of ensuring that legal obligations are met. They assess whether a proposed policy, procedure, service change or plan will affect people different on the basis of their 'protected characteristics' and if it will affect their human rights. Currently there are **nine protected characteristics** (previously known as 'equality groups' or 'equality strands'): age, disability, sex/gender, ethnicity/race, religion/fait, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership, and pregnancy/ maternity/paternity.

An activity does not need to impact on all 9 protected characteristics – impacting on just one is sufficient justification to complete an EqHIA.

[Health Impact Assessments \(HIAs\)](#) consider the potential impact of any change or amendment to a policy, service, plan, procedure or programme on the health and wellbeing of the population. HIAs help identify how people may be affected differently on the basis of where they live and potential impacts on health inequalities and health equity by assessing the distribution of potential effects within the population, particularly within vulnerable groups. 'Health' is not restricted to medical conditions, or the provision of health services, but rather encompasses the wide range of influences on people's health and wellbeing. This includes, but is not limited to, experience of discrimination, access to transport, housing, education, employment - known as the 'wider determinants of health'.

This [Equality and Health Impact Assessment \(EqHIA\)](#) brings together both impact assessments into a single tool which will result in a set of recommendations to eliminate discrimination and inequality; enhance potential positive impacts and mitigate where possible for negative impacts. In conducting this EqHIA you will need to assess the impact (positive, neutral or negative) of your activity on individuals and groups with **protected characteristics** (this includes staff delivering your activity), **socio-economic status** and **health & wellbeing**. Guidance on what to include in each section is given on the next pages.

### Guidance: What to include in background/context

In this section you will need to add the background/context of your activity, i.e. what is the activity intending to do, and why?

Make sure you include the scope and intended outcomes of the activity being assessed; and highlight any proposed changes. Please include a brief rationale for your activity and any supporting evidence for the proposal. Some questions to consider:

- What is the aim, objectives and intended outcomes?
- How does this activity meet the needs of the local population?
- Has this activity been implemented in another area? What were the outcomes?
- Is this activity being implemented as per best practice guidelines?
- Who were the key stakeholders in this activity?

\*Note that the boxes will expand as required

## Guidance: Who will be affected by the activity?

The people who will be affected may be

**Residents:** pay particular attention to vulnerable groups in the population who may be affected by this activity

**Businesses/ manufacturing / developers / small, medium or large enterprises**

**Employees:** e.g. Council staff for an internal activity, other statutory or voluntary sector employees, local businesses and services

\*Note that the boxes will expand as required

## Guidance: What to include in assessing a Protected Characteristic e.g. AGE

Please tick (✓) the relevant box:

**Positive**

**Neutral**

**Negative**

**Overall impact:** In this section you will need to consider and note what impact your activity will have on individuals and groups (including staff) with protected characteristics based on the data and information you have. You should note whether this is a positive, neutral or negative impact.

**It is essential that you note all negative impacts. This will demonstrate that you have paid 'due regard' to the Public Sector Equality Duty if your activity is challenged under the Equality Act.**

\*Note that the boxes will expand as required

**Evidence:** In this section you will need to document the evidence that you have used to assess the impact of your activity.

When assessing the impact, please consider and note how your activity contributes to the three aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) as stated in the section above.

It is essential that you note the full impact of your activity, so you can demonstrate that you have fully considered the equality implications and have paid 'due regard' to the PSED should the Council be challenged.

- If you have identified a **positive impact**, please note this.
- If you think there is a **neutral impact** or the impact is not known, please provide a full reason why this is the case.
- If you have identified a **negative impact**, please note what steps you will take to mitigate this impact. If you are unable to take any mitigating steps, please provide a full reason why. All negative impacts that have mitigating actions must be recorded in the **Action Plan**.
- **Please ensure that appropriate consultation with affected parties has been undertaken and evidenced**

**Sources used:** In this section you should list all sources of the evidence you used to assess the impact of your activity. This can include:

- Service specific data
- Population, demographic and socio-economic data. Suggested sources include:
  - o Service user monitoring data that your service collects
  - o [Havering Data Intelligence Hub](#)
  - o [Office for National Statistics \(ONS\)](#)

If you do not have any relevant data, please provide the reason why.

\*Note that the boxes will expand as required

## Guidance: What to include in assessing Health & Wellbeing Impact:

Please tick (✓) all the relevant boxes that apply:

**Positive**

**Neutral**

**Negative**

**Overall impact:** In this section you will need to consider and note whether the proposal could have an overall impact on, or implications for, people's health and wellbeing or any factors which determine people's health.

How will the activity help address inequalities in health?

Include here a brief outline of what could be done to enhance the positive impacts and, where possible, mitigate for the negative impacts.

\*Note that the boxes will expand as required

**Do you consider that a more in-depth HIA is required as a result of this brief assessment?** Please tick (✓) the relevant box

Yes ☐ No ☐

**Evidence:** In this section you will need to outline in more detail how you came to your conclusions above:

- What is the nature of the impact?
- Is the impact **positive** or **negative**? It is possible for an activity to have **both positive and negative impacts**. Consider here whether people will be able to access the service being offered; improve or maintain healthy lifestyles; improve their opportunities for employment/income; whether and how it will affect the environment in which they live (housing, access to parks & green space); what the impact on the family, social support and community networks might be
- What can be done to mitigate the negative impacts and/or enhance the positive impacts?
- If you think there is a **neutral impact**, or the impact is not known, please provide a brief reason why this is the case.
- What is the likelihood of the impact? Will the impact(s) be in weeks, months or years? In some cases the short-term risks to health may be worth the longer term benefits.
- Will the proposal affect different groups of people in different ways? A proposal that is likely to benefit one section of the community may not benefit others and could lead to inequalities in health.

**Please use the Health & Wellbeing Impact Tool in Appendix 2 as a guide/checklist to assess the potential wider determinants of health impacts.**

This tool will help guide your thinking as to what factors affect people's health and wellbeing, such as social support, their housing conditions, access to transport, employment, education, crime and disorder and environmental factors. It is not an exhaustive list, merely a tool to guide your assessment; there may be other factors specific to your activity.

Some questions you may wish to ask include:

- Will the activity impact on people's ability to socialise, potentially leading to social isolation?
- Will the activity affect a person's income and/or have an effect on their housing status?
- Is the activity likely to cause the recipient of a service more or less stress?
- Will any change in the service take into account different needs, such as those with learning difficulties?
- Will the activity affect the health and wellbeing of persons not directly related to the service/activity, such as carers, family members, other residents living nearby?
- If there is a short-term negative effect, what will be done to minimise the impact as much as possible?

- Are the longer-term impacts positive or negative? What will be done to either promote the positive effects or minimise the negative effects?
- Do the longer term positive outcomes outweigh the short term impacts?

\*Note that the boxes will expand as required

**Sources used:** In this section you should list all sources of the evidence you used to assess the impact of your activity. This could include, e.g.:

Information on the population affected

- Routinely collected local statistics (e.g. quality of life, health status, unemployment, crime, air quality, educational attainment, transport etc.)
- Local research/ Surveys of local conditions
- Community profiles

Wider Evidence

- Published Research, including evidence about similar proposals implemented elsewhere (e.g. Case Studies).
- Predictions from local or national models
- Locally commissioned research by statutory/voluntary/private organisations

Expert Opinion

- Views of residents and professionals with local knowledge and insight

\*Note that the boxes will expand as required

## Guidance: Outcome of the Assessment

On reflection, what is your overall assessment of the activity?

The purpose of conducting this assessment is to offer an opportunity to think, reflect and **improve** the proposed activity. It will make sure that the Council can evidence that it has considered its due regard to equality and health & wellbeing to its best ability.

It is not expected that all proposals will be immediately without negative impacts! However, where these arise, what actions can be taken to mitigate against potential negative effects, or further promote the positive impacts?

Please tick one of the 3 boxes in this section to indicate whether you think:

1. all equality and health impacts are adequately addressed in the activity – proceed with your activity pending all other relevant approval processes
2. the assessment identified some negative impacts which could be addressed – please complete the Action Plan in Section 4.
3. If the assessment reveals some significant concerns, this is the time to stop and re-think, making sure that we spend our Council resources wisely and fairly. There is no shame in stopping a proposal.

\*Note that the boxes will expand as required

## Guidance: Action Plan

For each protected characteristic/health & wellbeing impact where an impact on people or their lives has been identified, complete one row of the action plan. You can add as many further rows as required.

State whether the impact is Positive or Negative

Briefly outline the actions that can be taken to mitigate against the negative impact or further enhance a positive impact. These actions could be to make changes to the activity itself (service, proposal, strategy etc.) or to make contingencies/alterations in the setting/environment where the activity will take place.

For example, might staff need additional training in communicating effectively with people with learning difficulties, if a new service is opened specifically targeting those people? Is access to the service fair and equitable? What will the impact on other service users be? How can we ensure equity of access to the service by all users? Will any signage need changing? Does the building where the service being delivered comply with disability regulations?

## Guidance: Review

Changes happen all the time! A service/strategy/policy/activity that is appropriate at one time, may no longer be appropriate as the environment around us changes. This may be changes in our population, growth and makeup, legislative changes, environmental changes or socio-political changes.

Although we can't predict what's going to happen in the future, a review is recommended to ensure that what we are delivering as a Council is still the best use of our limited resources. The timescale for review will be dependent on the scale of the activity.

A major financial investment may require a review every 2-3 years for a large scale regeneration project over 10-15 years.

A small policy change may require a review in 6 months to assess whether there are any unintended outcomes of such a change.

Please indicate here how frequently it is expected to review your activity and a brief justification as to why this timescale is recommended.

## Appendix 2. Health & Wellbeing Impact Tool

Will the activity/service/policy/procedure affect any of the following characteristics? Please tick/check the boxes below

The following are a range of considerations that might help you to complete the assessment.

Lifestyle YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Personal circumstances YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	Access to services/facilities/amenities YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Diet <input type="checkbox"/> Exercise and physical activity <input type="checkbox"/> Smoking <input type="checkbox"/> Exposure to passive smoking <input type="checkbox"/> Alcohol intake <input type="checkbox"/> Dependency on prescription drugs <input type="checkbox"/> Illicit drug and substance use <input type="checkbox"/> Risky Sexual behaviour <input type="checkbox"/> Other health-related behaviours, such as tooth-brushing, bathing, and wound care	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Structure and cohesion of family unit <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Parenting <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Childhood development <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Life skills <input type="checkbox"/> Personal safety <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Employment status <input type="checkbox"/> Working conditions <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Level of income, including benefits <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Level of disposable income <input type="checkbox"/> Housing tenure <input type="checkbox"/> Housing conditions <input type="checkbox"/> Educational attainment <input type="checkbox"/> Skills levels including literacy and numeracy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> to Employment opportunities <input type="checkbox"/> to Workplaces <input type="checkbox"/> to Housing <input type="checkbox"/> to Shops (to supply basic needs) <input type="checkbox"/> to Community facilities <input type="checkbox"/> to Public transport <input type="checkbox"/> to Education <input type="checkbox"/> to Training and skills development <input type="checkbox"/> to Healthcare <input type="checkbox"/> to Social services <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> to Childcare <input type="checkbox"/> to Respite care <input type="checkbox"/> to Leisure and recreation services and facilities
Social Factors YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	Economic Factors YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	Environmental Factors YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social contact <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social support <input type="checkbox"/> Neighbourliness <input type="checkbox"/> Participation in the community <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Membership of community groups <input type="checkbox"/> Reputation of community/area <input type="checkbox"/> Participation in public affairs <input type="checkbox"/> Level of crime and disorder <input type="checkbox"/> Fear of crime and disorder <input type="checkbox"/> Level of antisocial behaviour <input type="checkbox"/> Fear of antisocial behaviour <input type="checkbox"/> Discrimination <input type="checkbox"/> Fear of discrimination <input type="checkbox"/> Public safety measures <input type="checkbox"/> Road safety measures	<input type="checkbox"/> Creation of wealth <input type="checkbox"/> Distribution of wealth <input type="checkbox"/> Retention of wealth in local area/economy <input type="checkbox"/> Distribution of income <input type="checkbox"/> Business activity <input type="checkbox"/> Job creation <input type="checkbox"/> Availability of employment opportunities <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Quality of employment opportunities <input type="checkbox"/> Availability of education opportunities <input type="checkbox"/> Quality of education opportunities <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Availability of training and skills development opportunities <input type="checkbox"/> Quality of training and skills development opportunities <input type="checkbox"/> Technological development <input type="checkbox"/> Amount of traffic congestion	<input type="checkbox"/> Air quality <input type="checkbox"/> Water quality <input type="checkbox"/> Soil quality/Level of contamination/Odour <input type="checkbox"/> Noise levels <input type="checkbox"/> Vibration <input type="checkbox"/> Hazards <input type="checkbox"/> Land use <input type="checkbox"/> Natural habitats <input type="checkbox"/> Biodiversity <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape, including green and open spaces <input type="checkbox"/> Townscape, including civic areas and public realm <input type="checkbox"/> Use/consumption of natural resources <input type="checkbox"/> Energy use: CO2/other greenhouse gas emissions <input type="checkbox"/> Solid waste management <input type="checkbox"/> Public transport infrastructure

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<sup>i</sup> We are unable to comment on the methodology used to produce this figure since there is currently only a brief abstract of this study available containing a summary of findings. The full report is forthcoming.

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## **Adopt London East**

### **Equality and Health Impact Assessment**

A detailed Equality and Health impact assessment (EqHIA) has been completed in respect of the potential impact on adoptive families

This assessment considers in detail all equality parameters as well as potential impacts on the adopters health and wellbeing

A detailed EqHIA in the same format will be completed in respect of all staff as soon as all information is available to support this assessment.

### **Progress to date**

All Human Resource leads have been involved in development of the processes by which staff will be transferred and all processes comply with relevant legislation.

Staff have been engaged in processes through a Staff Engagement event and a number of workshops designed to co-produce the service delivery model. A regular newsletter updates staff about developments and an enquiry in-box has been established to ensure all staff have an opportunity to raise any concerns they may have.

Adopt London East is committed to supporting our adoption staff to transition as smoothly as possible and where appropriate all reasonable steps will be taken to reduce any potential negative impact and support staff who have identified additional needs

Sue May

Practice Lead

15/11/2018

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## **Appendix D: The Benefits of Regionalisation**

### **Benefits**

There are a number of new benefits / advantages associated with a reduced, four borough footprint:

- The national feedback on live RAA's is that larger geographical boundaries can lead to far more complex models of delivery. Smaller geographical areas (as the east will be) are able to be more focussed on the demands and needs of the region.
- Smaller teams will be easier to manage. Building strong relationships with smaller dedicated teams of staff will help the RAA reach a positive culture of performance improvement and impact for children.
- Having fewer local authorities as part of the model will mean less (often conflicting) local authority priorities to concentrate on. A smaller number of local authorities lends itself to the achievement of stronger partnership working.

### **Early evaluation of established Regional Agencies**

Although regional adoption agencies have only recently been established; a number of early research studies have been undertaken and the findings are positive.

Adoption service staff consistently report that once embedded into a regional agency, they have greater job satisfaction and feel more able to make a difference. Adopters report they feel they have a more responsive support offer and improved training from a service with a sole focus on adoption work.

Adoption service data and performance information were used well to inform service delivery. In some early adopters performance initially declined but all report improved performance in terms of adopter recruitment and child placement. Lessons from the early adopters have been learned and incorporated into the Adopt London East model. Strong regional partnerships have been developed. A number of partnerships involved innovative practice

Ofsted have now inspected 14 Local Authorities who have adoption services provided through a regional adoption agency. All note improved services and in 7 specific positive comments have been made about the regional adoption agency.

### **Benefits of regionalisation in East London**

Adoption services across all East London agencies are small and Individual Local Authorities struggle to provide the full range of adoption services. Detailed evaluation of adoption services has identified a number of challenges (see table below) all of which will benefit from a regional approach within East London.

The performance section of this report details target performance improvements in years 1 to 3. These have been developed using a cautious model of service delivery working towards best practice models.

The East London Adoption services already work together through the ELPAC consortium in order to ameliorate some of these challenges. Working in cooperation has provided many benefits and these existing working relationships will be built upon to ensure a smooth transition into one organisation

<b>Challenge</b>	<b>Regional solution</b>	<b>Benefits</b>
Against a background of intensive challenge from the voluntary sector adopter recruitment has not been maximised	Working in partnership with the Pan London Adopt London brand brings a dedicated service communications budget a large single brand and an ability to develop both London wide and East London specific campaigns	Improved adopter base for child matches maintaining their connection to the local area  Savings against the Inter-agency fee budget
Some delays in assessment due to worker availability	One recruitment and assessment team will undertake all assessments, work will be allocated more effectively. Should demand for assessments increase Independent social workers may be used	Increased number of adopters  Adopters do not apply elsewhere  Savings as above
Numbers of children with a placement order for adoption are relatively low across East London.	An East London regional adoption agency will provide a forum for effective working relationship with the East London courts	Increased number of children benefit from the stability offered through adoption  In LA savings against the LAC budget
Some matches of harder to place children take longer than they should	A single family finding team working across East London and beyond will pool resources to work more effectively. Local relationships with children's social workers will be maintained through maintenance of a partial base in each Local Authority	Children benefit from the stability offered through adoption at the earliest opportunity  In LA savings against the budget
The adoption support offer is underdeveloped.	A single adoption support service will pool all resources and enable	Adoptive families benefit from improved support.

A small local adoption support service is unable to provide the range of services needed.	the service to develop a clear core offer to all adopters and maximise usage of the Adoption Support Fund	Outcomes improve  Placement disruptions decline
Regional partnerships are under developed	A single agency operating in a coterminous region to key partner agencies will engage with agencies in development of innovative partnership working, clear referral pathways and co-working relationships	Adoptive families benefit from a clear shared offer  Children are better supported in education and health services  Maximisation of the partnership offer will impact positively on budgets
Courts delay and often block the progress of the adoption process	A single agency, operating under a single head of service, led by a partnership of local authorities will be far better placed to influence court decision making processes	Speedier processes and improved performance  Enhanced regional reputation
No joined up commissioning	A single commissioning framework and quality assurance process across the region and potentially across London	Commissioned services are better aligned to the needs of children and young people Value for money and reduced overall spend on commissioned contracts

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