

CHILDREN AND LEARNING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE

Subject Heading:	Adopt London East Annual Report
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Policy context:	Attached is the Annual Report of Havering hosted Adopt London East for 2019/20. This builds on an update report presented in February 2020
Financial summary:	The service is financially self-sufficient and funded through joint arrangements with each partner Local Authority. There are no direct financial implications for consideration within this report

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

Communities making Havering	x
Places making Havering	[]
Opportunities making Havering	x
Connections making Havering	x

SUMMARY

Adopt London East has been formed in response to a 2015 government directive to all Local Authorities to streamline adoption services through the development of regional arrangements by 2020. Adopt London East is a regional adoption agency,

hosted by Havering; providing adoption services for Havering, Tower Hamlets, Newham and Barking and Dagenham. The agency works in close collaboration with Adopt London North, South and West. Together these agencies provide services for 23 London Local Authorities. The majority of the remaining London Authorities joined a regional agency hosted by Coram BAAF

The Annual Report provides a summary of the development and functions of the agency and contains performance information for 2019/20. Appendix 1 details Havering specific performance information

Statistical returns measure long-term trends but Adopt London East in-house statistical records provide clear evidence of early improvements in performance and activity since go-live.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Sub-Committee is recommended to receive and note the report.

REPORT DETAIL

1. Background Information

All adoption agencies are required to provide an annual report to their governing bodies. Regional Adoption Agencies (RAA's) must provide a report to their partnership board and to elected members in all partnership Local Authorities.

The report is the first Annual Report of Adopt London East and provides information on service development and performance in 2019/20. The service went live on 1st October and the report therefore focusses on performance in quarter 3 and 4 of 2019/20. This follows an update report presented to the Children and Learning Overview and Scrutiny Sub-committee in February 2020.

Appendix 1 attached to the report provides information on adoption performance in Havering throughout 2019/20 based on the Adoption and Special Guardian Leadership Board (ASGLB) data returns.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Financial implications and risks:

The service budget was approved by Havering Cabinet on 16th January 2019. The full budget and individual partner contributions were subsequently approved by all partner cabinets.

The partnership agreement signed by all Local Authorities includes the mechanism for annual and in-year review of the budget.

Review of the budget is undertaken on a quarterly basis through the partnership board and annually within the annual general meeting.

There are currently no identified risks in respect of this budget

Legal implications and risks:

There are no apparent legal implications in noting the content of the Report.

Human Resources implications and risks:

The recommendations made in this report do not give rise to any identifiable HR risks or implications that would affect either the Council or its workforce.

A full consultation exercise was undertaken under TUPE regulations between May 2019 and July 2019. All adoption staff eligible to transfer under TUPE regulations successfully transferred on 1st October.

Informal consultations with staff have continued and all challenges (for example responses to Covid 19) have been resolved in cooperation. Periodic meetings are held with TU representatives whenever requested.

No outstanding issues have been identified

Equalities implications and risks:

An Equalities and Health impact assessment was undertaken prior to the presentation of the Cabinet report as presented on 16th January 2019. This considered all equality dimensions. As Adopt London East has been developed to improve the service offered to our adoptive families and widen opportunities to adopt: the assessment was largely positive. Where any potential issues were identified measures were put in place.

The primary potential issue was in respect of distance from service delivery, which may impact on adoptive families less able to travel through differing ability, childcare or financial issues. This was resolved through an ongoing commitment to local delivery of services.

The Equality and Health impact assessment was presented to the Children's scrutiny sub-committee in February 2020