

REPORT FOR: Corporate Parenting Panel

Date of Meeting: 14 June 2017

Subject: **INFORMATION REPORT – Adoption and Fostering Regional initiatives**

Responsible Officer: Chris Spencer
Corporate Director, People Services

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Christine Robson, Portfolio Holder,
Children, Schools and Young People

Exempt: NO

Wards affected: All wards

Enclosures: **None**

Section 1 – Summary

This reports summarises two recent initiatives

- 1) Adoption regionalisation – and Harrow’s work with Coram Capitol
- 2) West London Shared Fostering

FOR INFORMATION

Section 2 – Report

- 1) Harrow has recently celebrated its 10 year anniversary as part of an adoption partnership with Coram, a national leading voluntary adoption agency. As such it has been in a good position to positively respond the Governments adoption regionalisation programme which now requires local authorities to work together in regions with voluntary adoption agencies to improve the adoption outcomes for children. Coram Capital has been established with Coram working with Harrow and 4 other local authorities in London and the South East. Harrow has benefited from the adoption expertise of Coram and having access to their pool of adopters and extensive adoption support services. The Coram Capital model will develop this further and look at progressing our partnership which is already seen as being at the forefront of adoption regionalisation
- 2) Harrow has been part of a shared innovation bid with Hounslow, Brent and Ealing to develop a West London Shared Fostering Service with a view of exploring innovative and creative ways of increasing and improving the foster care provision across Wes London. Ideas being explored include shared specialist fostering provision and support services to placements and a joint approach to recruitment and assessment. Traditionally Local authorities have been competing against each other regarding foster care recruitment. This new model will focus on the benefits of collaboration and pooled knowledge, skills and resources. Recruiting and retaining local foster carers to meet the needs of Looked After Children is one of the local authorities greatest challenges. There is a national shortage of foster carers which impacts on the options available to children and their outcomes and also has financial implications for the local authority which has to use expensive residential placements to fill some of these shortages

The initial feedback from both of these proposals has been positive and we are working with partners and the Dfe to confirm the monitoring and tracking criteria and future funding streams.

Due to the General Election recent activity has been on hold but will resume again in July where further plans will be outlined in more detail

Section 3 – Further Information

Future updates will be presented to the Panel

Section 4 – Financial Implications

This is an information report. Both of these initiatives have value for money at their centre and offer potential savings on children's placement costs Both attract funding from central Government which is being monitored and tracked

Section 5 - Equalities implications

Both of these developments will offer greater choice of provision ensuring the diverse needs of Looked After children will be addressed

Section 6 – Council Priorities

The Council's vision:

Working Together to Make a Difference for Harrow

Please identify how the report incorporates the administration's priorities.

- Making a difference for the vulnerable
- Making a difference for communities
- Making a difference for local businesses
- Making a difference for families

Name:....Jo Frost	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer
Date:1/6/17.....		

Ward Councillors notified:	N/A
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Section 7 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Background Papers: None

Contact: Peter Tolley, Head of Service Corporate Parenting
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