

Appendix 1

Evaluation of delivery model against DfE requirements of an RAA

The DfE's '**Adoption a vision for change**' outlined the core aims for an RAA, which the delivery model has been evaluated against (DfE requirements in **bold**):

- **Decisions about placements are always made in children's best interests. Quality of care and stability of placement are rightly prioritised by decision makers whenever they make decisions about a child's future. Adoption is pursued determinedly when it is the right option for a child.**

This model will ensure that the systems already established in each local authority to ensure that adoption considered as a permanence option for all children and where selected robustly pursued, can be retained and strengthened.

- **Delivery has at its heart innovation and practice excellence. Systems are designed around the needs of children, free from bureaucratic barriers that do not add value, and draw on the best of both the statutory and voluntary sectors.**

The model allows resources to remain focussed on practice and service improvement rather than be re directed to the bureaucratic issues attendant on restructuring services.

- **Social workers are highly skilled professionals who make high quality, evidence based decisions and do not tolerate damaging delay for children in their care. Social workers are part of an expert, confident workforce with the knowledge and skills to make and pursue complex and challenging decisions. Once a decision for adoption has been made, the adoption plan is progressed swiftly by social workers driven by a sense of urgency.**

The model will build on the existing good practice by social workers across the six local authorities. Adoption social workers' anxieties/concerns about any negative impact of a restructure on their current work will be removed, Instead opportunities will be provided for workers to come together to share practice and design improvements to services. Networking events will be set up that will build relationships between workers across the local authorities, making it easier to establish productive working relationships around family finding.

- **Matches are made without unnecessary delay. RAAs provide a large pool of adopters for every child in need of a new family. Where a match is not immediately available within the RAA, the search is extended nationally without delay.**

This model will enable resources to be concentrated on devising/implementing a shared effective tracking and family finding system. This will not necessitate every worker being on the same IT case management system, so workers can remain on

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their local authority's system rather than have to be trained to use a different one. The tracking and family finding system should be able to immediately flag up if there is no potential match within the RAA so that a search can be conducted via the national adoption register.

- **Every adoptive family has access to an ongoing package of appropriate support with a right to a high quality, specialist assessment of need. This support is delivered from day one and continues throughout childhood whenever it is required. Adoptive families have a supportive relationship with their local agency and know they can turn to them for additional support at any time, without judgment.**

This model will enable families to build on the supportive relationship with the adoption workers in their local authority whilst also enabling these workers to deliver adoption support services with adoption workers in other local authorities. The existing expertise and skills in adoption support work can be shared across all local authorities, enhancing practice and giving opportunities for innovative service delivery across all local authorities and with Voluntary sector partners.

- **The voice of adopters and their children is at the heart of national and local policy decision making and delivery of services. The views of adopters and adopted children are demonstrably used in the shaping and co-production of local services and help to inform national policy developments.**

The model will ensure that adopters and children can be involved in the co-production of local services by maintaining the link with the local authority. The RAA will actively promote adopters engagement and feedback on this via the pan – regional 'Hub' into national developments.