

18 July 2023		ITEM: 6
Corporate Parenting Committee		
Adoption Statement of Purpose		
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Non-key decision	
Report of: Sally Medbury – Team Manager Adoption Service Liz Shields – Service Manager		
Accountable Assistant Director: Janet Simon – Assistant Director Children’s Social Care and Early Help		
Accountable Director: Sheila Murphy – Corporate Director of Children’s Services		
This report is Public		

Executive Summary

This report is to update members of the Committee on Thurrock Council’s Adoption Statement of Purpose which is reviewed annually. The Adoption Statement of purpose is required by the National Minimum Standards for Adoption 18¹. Key aspects of standard 18 are:

- 18.1. The adoption agency and adoption support agency has a clear statement of purpose which is available to and understood by staff, volunteers, children, birth parents and guardians, prospective adopters and adopters, and is reflected in any policies, procedures and guidance.
- 18.2. The aims and objectives of the Statement of Purpose should be outcome focussed and, for adoption agencies, show how the service will meet outcomes for children.

Thurrock is a registered Adoption Agency and in line with national expectations, delivers Adoption Services as part of a regional arrangement. Thurrock is a member of ‘Adopt East’ which is an alliance of local authorities and charitable adoption agencies. The Statement of Purpose reflects this

Members are invited to review the Adoption Statement of Purpose against the requirements of the National Minimum Standard 18.

1. Recommendation

1.1 That the Members of the Committee review Thurrock's Adoption Statement of Purpose.

2. Introduction and Background

2.1 The Adoption Statement of Purpose fulfils the requirement of Standard 18 of the Adoption Minimum Standards (Care Standards Act 2000) and Regulation 2 of the Local Authority Adoption Services (England) Regulations 2003. The Statement of Purpose sets out the aims and objectives of the service as a whole and how this impacts children and their families. As such it forms the basis for all the other policies relating to Adoption.

2.2 The adoption Statement of Purpose has a shared framework with the other adoption agencies in Adopt East. Adopt East is a regional adoption alliance which brings together the professionalism, skills and expertise of eight local authorities and two voluntary adoption agencies from across the East of England. The local authorities are Suffolk, Southend, Thurrock, Essex, Norfolk, Hertfordshire, Bedford and Luton. In addition, there are two voluntary agency partners, Adoption Plus and Barnardo's, and the charity Adoption UK. The scale of our alliance means that our adopters have access to a large number of children waiting for adoption. By working collaboratively, we are able to share best practice. This means avoiding any unnecessary delay in the making of your new family and ensuring support is central. Offering a wealth of specialist skills alongside a friendly and respectful approach, Adopt East ensures that our families receive the best service and the right support, at whatever stage of their adoption journey.

2.3 The Adoption Statement of Purpose is a publicly facing document and gives an overview of the service offered, their purpose and structure. All members of the service should work according to the Statement of Purpose and the policies it supports.

2.2 Members are advised that the Adoption Statement of Purpose is reviewed annually, and the current statement is attached.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

3.1 Thurrock's Adoption statement of purpose 2023-2024 is attached.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

4.1 The Thurrock Adoption Statement of Purpose is a key document that is required under the National Minimum Standards. Members are invited to review and provide comment on this.

5. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

5.1 None

6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact

6.1 None

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **David May**
Strategic Lead Finance

There are no financial implications to the report.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Judith Knight**
Interim Head of Legal (Social Care and Education)

The Local Authority is required by the Local Authority Adoption Services (England) Regulations 2003 as amended in 2005 to have a statement of purpose. The Statement of Purpose covers the information that is required by the regulations.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Rebecca Lee,**
Community Development and Equalities, Adults, Housing and Health

The Adoption Service is committed to practice which promotes equality, diversity and inclusion, and will carry out its duties in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and related Codes of Practice and Anti-discriminatory policy. Staff members are from diverse backgrounds and heritage. Marketing and recruitment materials are designed to be inclusive.

7.4 Other implications (where significant) – i.e., Staff, Health Inequalities, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder, and Impact on Looked After Children

None

8. **Background papers used in preparing the report** (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

None

9. **Appendices to the report**

Appendix 1 - Thurrock Adoption Statement of Purpose

Report Author:

Sally Medbury – Team Manager Adoption

Liz Shields – Service Manager