

**AGENDA ITEM 7****RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL****CABINET****16<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2014****REPORT OF THE GROUP DIRECTOR COMMUNITY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES****ESTABLISHING THE VALE, VALLEYS AND CARDIFF REGIONAL ADOPTION COLLABORATIVE****Author: Andrew Gwynn, Service Director Children's Services****Tel No: 01443 495118****1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To update Cabinet on the progress of plans to establish the Vale, Valleys and Cardiff Regional Adoption Collaborative.
- 1.2 To provide Cabinet with a report detailing the full resource implications of the establishment of the Vale, Valleys and Cardiff Regional Adoption Collaborative; financial, employment and legal implications of the new service following the commencement of formal consultation with staff and trade unions.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that Members:

- 2.1 Note the contents of the report.
- 2.2 Agree the establishment of the Vale, Valleys and Cardiff Regional Adoption Collaborative as detailed in the report and Business Case outlined under **Appendix 1**, with governance arrangements based on a Joint Committee model.
- 2.3 Agree that the post of Business Support Manager be established and advertised by the Vale of Glamorgan Council alongside the post of Regional Adoption Manager.
- 2.4 Receive a further update report following conclusion of the consultation with affected staff and trade unions detailing any substantial changes to the resource, employment, and legal implications set out in this report.
- 2.5 Delegate authority for the Group Director of Community and Children's Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children's Social Services and Equalities, S151 officer and Director, Legal & Democratic Services to agree and finalise the terms of the proposed Partnership Agreement.

### **3. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 To enable the Regional Collaborative to be established on an agreed basis in terms of cost, funding, income, savings, service level, structure and timing (of) and implementation of the Regional Collaborative to enable the creation of the shared service with appropriate governance mechanisms.
- 3.2 To enable the efficient and effective administration of the service in line with the Joint Committee governance model.
- 3.3 To enable the Regional Collaborative to be established in line with the timescales set out in this report and associated appendices and for the appointment of the Regional Adoption Manager and Business Support Manager to be undertaken.
- 3.4 To enable completion of the final version of the Partnership Agreement.

### **4. BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 Cabinet will be aware of the proposals for establishing the Vale, Valleys & Cardiff Regional Adoption Collaborative which were contained in the reports of the Group Director for Community and Children's Services on 28<sup>th</sup> October 2013 and the 31<sup>st</sup> July 2014. The recommendations of these reports were approved by the Cabinets in Cardiff, Rhondda Cynon Taf and Merthyr Tydfil to allow for the development of the Regional Adoption Collaborative. The Vale of Glamorgan Cabinet did not make the recommendation in relation to the appointment of the Regional Adoption Manager and made an in principle decision to the Vale of Glamorgan acting as host local authority.
- 4.2 Since the date of the last Cabinet Report and the decision of the Executive, plans to progress the National Adoption Service on a national and regional level have continued. As the host authority for the central elements of the National Service, Cardiff has worked with the WLGA to establish a national tier of the service with the appointment of the Director of Operations and other key personnel. The National Adoption Advisory Group has been established. The National Adoption Service was formally launched at the Senedd in Cardiff on the 5<sup>th</sup> November 2014 during National Adoption Week.
- 4.3 It is Welsh Government's expectation and a commitment by local government that all five Regional Collaboratives which will form part of the National Adoption Service in Wales are to become operational in 2014. In order to ensure the long term sustainability of the National Service and as part of implementing the Social Services & Well-Being Act (Wales) Act 2014, Welsh Government officers are in the process of drafting legislative powers pursuant to the Act which will require local authorities to collaborate in relation to the provision of their adoption services. These new powers have recently been issued to local authorities for consultation.
- 4.4 Within this Regional Collaborative, considerable work has been undertaken to progress plans to develop the collaboration, a business case and a service delivery model. The Project Development Officer has continued to oversee the

development of the implementation plan. A number of technical groups with representation from each of the four local authorities have continued to agree issues in respect of financial, human resources (HR), legal and IT and information governance matters. The technical groups have provided detailed information and advice at the request of the Steering Group in overseeing the development of the Collaborative.

- 4.5 Joint working arrangements in respect of training of prospective adopters and the sharing of assessments of prospective adopters and the resources available in respect of placements for children have been developed across the region. Plans are also in place to establish a Regional Adoption Panel which will operate from locations north and south of the regional area. Expressions of interest have been invited from members of the existing Adoption Panels to join a central list of Panel members to support the new Regional Panels.
- 4.6 Work is continuing in relation to the development of procedures and protocols with local authorities to underpin the work of the Regional Collaborative. National Performance Indicators in respect of the provision for adoption services have been published by Welsh Government and, with effect from April 2014, all Regional Collaboratives have been required to report upon their performance as measured against the National Performance Indicators. Systems have been developed at a local level to capture the data and report as required on a quarterly basis. The Vale of Glamorgan has responsibility for uploading the regional data onto the national database and the Collaborative has fully complied with the reporting requirements in a timely manner.

## 5. RELEVANT ISSUES AND OPTIONS

- 5.1 This report sets out the results of the detailed work undertaken by the Councils to date on developing proposals for the Regional Collaborative. The business case which supports the implementation of the Regional Collaborative and which contains the proposed service delivery model can be found at **Appendix 1 (to the business case)**. The key issues are summarised below.
- 5.2 The policy and legislative background in respect of the development of the Regional Collaboratives sets a very clear agenda for change, as detailed in earlier reports considered by the Executive. In the business case, Welsh Government's expectations for the establishment and operation of all Regional Adoption Collaboratives in 2014 are considered in line with legislation which makes provision for joint arrangements in relation to an Authority's adoption service. Welsh Ministers currently may only direct two or more local authorities to enter into specified arrangements for the provision of their adoption but, before giving a direction under this section, they must consult the local authorities to which it is to be given.
- 5.3 The anticipated timescale has presented a challenge in terms of developing an agreed service delivery model across the four authorities which best delivers the aims of the Collaborative in delivering an integrated, comprehensive service which will promote service priorities and ensure performance measures are met. A

number of proposed service delivery models were considered as set out in the business case.

- 5.4 It is proposed that the current model of delivering adoption services across the four local authority areas involved in this Regional Collaborative will change from four generic teams to services being provided by three co-located specialist teams. It is envisaged that the specialist focus will improve service delivery and outcomes, particularly in respect of the recruitment and assessment of adopters and increase placement opportunities for children requiring adoptive placements. It will also ensure that, through the creation of a specialist team specifically for adoption support services, this function will be afforded the same priority as other service areas.
- 5.5 Reorganising teams and amalgamating staff in one location may result initially in short term disruption to service delivery. However, it is intended that staff will retain their own caseload upon transfer to the host authority until the reorganisation takes place. We believe that the immediate impact upon service delivery will be outweighed by longer term benefits and efficiencies as a result of collaborative working.
- 5.6 The proposed service delivery model and staffing structure in respect of the Collaborative has formed part of the consultation process and was based upon a detailed analysis of the service needs over a period of three years and likely projected future service needs. A summary of the relevant data is contained in the business case. The Regional Collaborative will be enhanced by the creation of two new posts, the Regional Adoption Manager and Business Support Manager. The ability to recruit to these posts will be a key milestone in establishing the Collaborative and the proposed transfer of staff. This is reflected elsewhere in other Collaboratives in Wales which have already established similar regional management arrangements.
- 5.7 In deciding the number and type of posts required (both at a managerial and practitioner level), the need to streamline the number of managerial posts within the new structure was considered. It was recognised that practitioners working in adoption generally have more experience than newly qualified practitioners and so they need less supervisory oversight. The proposed structure will not in the future retain the Senior Practitioner posts which currently exist in Rhondda Cynon Taf & Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council; however, as two of these staff are 'in scope' for transfer these individuals will retain their Senior Practitioner role for as long as they remain within their current posts. The rationale for this is outlined in detail in the business case but is derived from a lack of uniformity in the role across the four authorities and the potential for duplication with other roles within the structure.
- 5.8 The proposed structure of the business support staff reflects the anticipated workload to be generated by the Collaborative and having regard to economies of scale resulting from co-location.

- 5.9 The financial and budgetary implications of the new service along with the proposals for premises, IT requirements and governance arrangements are set out in the business case. These requirements can be achieved within budget.
- 5.10 The key milestones to be achieved in implementing the Collaborative, including the steps which have been achieved to date, are detailed in the business case. The timescales proposed to ensure that the essential elements of the Collaborative are operational remain challenging. The commitment to ongoing consultation with staff and recognised trade unions throughout this process will mitigate against some of the risks, along with robust joint working and decision making arrangements between the partner authorities.

## **6. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCIAL AND EMPLOYMENT)**

- 6.1 There will be one off implementation costs to cover the procurement of new IT and communications equipment, relocation, marketing and other peripheral costs. These are projected to total £38,000. It is intended to fund these initial costs from grant monies made available by Welsh Government to implement the new legislation. These costs have been apportioned to authorities as follows:

	<b>Cardiff (37.1%) £000</b>	<b>RCT (34.8%) £000</b>	<b>Merthyr (11.5%) £000</b>	<b>VOGC (16.6%) £000</b>	<b>TOTAL £000</b>
<b>One off Costs</b>	14	13	5	6	38

- 6.2 Each local authority's existing budgets and expenditure have been reviewed and an indicative budget for the first year of operation has been established. Overall the indicative budget remains broadly within the existing funding levels of each authority. Contributions to be made by each authority to the Collaborative have been projected and are shown below in 6.5.
- 6.3 It is considered that this collaboration can provide an improved level of service for users, will be a more efficient and resilient service, while achieving an overall level of savings and will aim to reduce the overall LAC population across the region.
- 6.4 Certain areas of expenditure will not be included in the budget to be transferred for the first year (e.g. adoption allowances, adoption support and agency fees). While these payments will be administered by the Collaborative, they will be directly recharged to the responsible authority until standardised policies for their payment are put in place and further work is undertaken on developing a formula for their recharge.

6.5 The initial proposed budget and contributions from authorities is as follows:

Costs	TOTAL		Cardiff		Merthyr		RCT		VOG	
	£000	%	£000	%	£000	%	£000	%	£000	
<b>Staff</b>	1,010	37.1	375	11.5	116	34.8	351	16.6	168	
<b>Other Staff</b>	37	37.1	14	11.5	4	34.8	13	16.6	6	
<b>Commissioning</b>	46	37.1	17	11.5	5	34.8	16	16.6	8	
<b>Running</b>	117	37.1	43	11.5	14	34.8	41	16.6	19	
<b>Panel</b>	30	37.9	11	10.2	3	44.6	14	7.3	2	
<b>Hosting</b>	30	37.1	11	11.5	4	34.8	10	16.6	5	
<b>Annual Cost</b>	1,270		471		146		445		208	
<b>Current Budget</b>	1,289		472		154		454		209	
<b>Over/(Under) Current Budget</b>	(19)		(1)		(8)		(9)		(1)	

6.6 The proposed accommodation for the Collaborative at Ty Pennant, Pontypridd has been costed and leasing arrangements will be agreed via the respective Estates Department of the Vale of Glamorgan and Rhondda Cynon Taf.

6.7 The IT requirements of the Collaborative and the provision of support to an offsite office location by the Vale of Glamorgan Council have been scoped and costed and are included in the proposed budgets previously shown.

6.8 The Human Resources (HR) and Employment Law Technical Group has considered all staff transfer options and it is agreed that the principles of TUPE apply. Staff and recognised trade unions have been advised of this as part of the consultation process.

6.9 Work has been undertaken to determine contractual terms and conditions and differences which may apply. HR representatives have also identified those staff in scope for transfer. It is acknowledged that there will be a change of staff location for some and potential changes to terms and conditions, but these issues will be subject to the consultation process with staff.

6.10 The staff consultation process began on 20 August 2014 following discussions with the recognised trade unions. All affected staff have received written correspondence informing them of the process. Consultation meetings for all staff in scope for transfer to the Collaborative were held during the week commencing 13 October 2014 in each of the authorities and are planned again for the first week in December 2014. Trade union representatives have been involved in these meetings.

6.11 The new posts of Regional Adoption Manager and Business Support Manager are key to the establishment of the Collaborative and it is envisaged that these posts will be recruited to via a competitive process ring-fenced initially to the four local authority areas. Other management posts will be appointed via a matching/competitive process.

6.12 The transfer date for staff will take effect after the appointment of the Regional Adoption Manager, enabling the Collaborative to become fully operational. As part of the consultation process, staff have been asked to indicate a preference for a particular specialist team and these will be considered as part of the selection process for the teams. It is anticipated that there will be no surplus staff in the restructure and that recruitment of new staff will be required.

## **7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

### **Proposed Collaborative Model**

- 7.1 Following implementation of s.170 Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, which inserts a new s.3A into the Children and Adoption Act 2002, Welsh Ministers may direct two or more local authorities in Wales to enter into specified arrangements with each other in relation to the provision of specified services maintained under s.3 (1) of the Children and Adoption Act 2002. Before giving a direction under this section, the Welsh Ministers must consult the local authorities to which it is to be given. 'Specified arrangements' under s.3 (1) of the Adoption and Children Act 2002 include (among other things) arrangements as set out in s.170 (3) (a)-(h) of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, and includes arrangements as to the 'establishment and operation of a panel to make recommendations as to whether a child should be placed for adoption; whether a prospective adopter for adoption with a particular prospective adopter.
- 7.2 Whenever Councils consider working together, a decision will be required as to the collaboration model to be adopted. In determining the collaborative model to be used, it is important that the decision is based on a detailed analysis of the costs, benefits and other implications of adopting the model proposed and comparison with other options available in respect of delivering the services concerned. The body of the report and the appendices attached set out the detail of the analysis undertaken, leading to the recommendation that a Regional Adoption Collaborative be established for the four local authorities based on the Joint Committee model.
- 7.3 The Joint Committee model provides that the Council would delegate some of its functions relating to the provision of adoption services. The Joint Committee has no separate legal identity and so cannot own property or enter into contracts in its own right. It is proposed that one Authority, the Vale of Glamorgan Council, will act as host authority and take responsibility for employment of staff directly affected, enter any third party contracts required and provide all support services required.
- 7.4 If it is agreed to proceed with the proposal, it will be necessary for the Authorities to conclude a formal agreement, referred to as a 'Partnership Agreement'. This agreement will set out amongst other things:
- The extent of the matters to be delegated to the Joint Committee, and any delegations to officers in the shared service.
  - The constitutional basis of the joint committee and its terms of reference.

- The terms of reference and membership of the Management and Executive Boards.
- The termination and exit provisions.
- The structure of the Regional Collaborative, staffing proposals and pensions.
- As to the apportionment of costs, and what indemnities the Host Authority would seek from the other authorities in respect of carrying out its role.
- The financial management arrangements.
- Contain provision to address matters such as disputes, variations, data protection and freedom of information.

7.5 The proposals raise employment implications for staff, including staff that support the service concerned. This requires a continued communication and engagement strategy with staff and the recognised trade unions, which has commenced and is ongoing across the four local authorities. The proposals will involve the initial transfer of employees to the host employer, the Vale of Glamorgan Council, in accordance with the principles of TUPE.

## **8. STAFF CONSULTATION**

8.1 This report has been subject to consultation with staff and recognised trade unions. In accordance with each respective local authority's collective agreements, consultation with their respective trade unions has started and is expected to continue throughout the project. There has also been staff consultation and engagement as detailed above and this is also expected to continue throughout the project.



**APPENDIX 1**



# Vale, Valleys & Cardiff Regional Adoption Collaboration

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## Business Case

October 2014

## Vale, Valleys & Cardiff Regional Adoption Collaboration – Business Case

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### Executive Summary

This business case outlines the reasons for change and the way in which it is proposed to change the structure and processes of the Adoption service as required by Welsh Government. Due to the statutory requirement to collaborate, this business case does not seek to establish the case for collaboration, but rather sets out how the councils intend to work together to achieve the aim and objectives of this component of the Social Services and Well-Being Act (Wales) 2014.

The aim of the Collaborative is to create a fully integrated Regional Adoption Collaborative comprised of Merthyr Tydfil CBC, Vale of Glamorgan Council, Cardiff Council and Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC's adoption service operating within one management structure and in accordance with statutory requirements.

The Vale, Valleys & Cardiff Regional Adoption Collaborative is one of the five collaboratives which are expected to form part of the National Adoption Service in Wales. The requirement to collaborate is expected to provide a pathway for creating an effective and responsive National Adoption Service. It is anticipated that this will ensure more effective recruitment and support for adoptive placements and reduce delays for children waiting for adoptive placements.

Considerable work has been undertaken to date to progress the Collaborative and details of this work are contained within this Business Case. This has included involvement of the trade unions, staff, technical input from officers with the relevant expertise, review by senior officers and referral to the Executive within each respective authority. The Collaborative's development has been approved by each authority's Executive, both in 2013 and 2014.

It is considered that this collaboration can provide an improved level of service for users, will be a more efficient and resilient service, while achieving an overall level of savings and will aim to reduce the overall LAC population across the region.

## 1. Background

In December 2012, the Deputy Minister for Children and Social Services proposed a National Adoption Service be developed in Wales and this Collaborative emanates from those proposals and the subsequent legislative powers made to facilitate it.

It came against the backdrop of change being considered across social services generally. In February 2011 "Sustainable Social Services - A Framework for Action" was published by Welsh Government. This had involved a review of current social service functions across Wales and consideration of how it would cope with future demands placed upon it in order to ensure that social services were sustainable for the future. It recognised that services needed to be re-shaped and that some services might be better provided more collectively as opposed to on an authority by authority basis. It indicated at that juncture that adoption services might be better provided nationally. In addition to this there has also been the Family Justice Review across England and Wales in November 2011 which looked across the Court system concerning Family matters. This included public law matters such as care proceedings and there has also been an in-depth inquiry from the Children and Young People Committee of the National Assembly in Wales, the findings of which emanated from a detailed consultation into the position concerning adoption in Wales.

As set out in the Executive Summary, establishing a National Adoption Service is a key component of the Social Services and Well-Being Act (Wales) 2014. This Act provides the legislative basis for the Service and amends existing primary legislation concerning the provision of local authority adoption services enabling local authorities to enter into "specified arrangements" with other authorities for the provision of adoption services. This also provides Welsh Government with the power to direct local authorities to collaborate where this is not happening.

ADSS Cymru, working closely with the WLGA, developed a functional model for the delivery of a National Adoption Service via five regional collaboratives. This was endorsed in principle by Leaders at the WLGA, Welsh Government's Expert Advisory Group on Adoption and the Deputy Minister during 2013. On the basis of this model the National Adoption Service is being developed across Wales. Accordingly it is proposed that the Vale, Valleys & Cardiff Regional Adoption Collaborative is one of the five collaboratives which will form part of the National Adoption Service in Wales. This Collaborative includes the Vale of Glamorgan, Cardiff, Merthyr Tydfil and Rhondda Cynon Taff (RCT) councils.

The other four collaboratives in Wales are North Wales (comprising Wrexham, Flintshire, Gwynedd, Conwy, Denbighshire and Ynys Mon), South East Wales (comprising Blaenau Gwent, Monmouth, Torfaen, Newport and Caerphilly), West and Mid Wales (comprising Ceredigion, Carmarthenshire, Pembrokeshire and Powys) and Western Bay (comprising of Neath, Port Talbot, Swansea and Bridgend).

## 2. Project Aim, Objectives & Scope

### Aim:

The aim is that the four local authorities will establish and deliver a unified, Regional Adoption Collaborative on behalf of the National Adoption Service.

### Objectives:

- To carry out the functions of the National Service and deliver a comprehensive adoption Collaborative on a regional level.
- To ensure compliance with legislation, regulations, minimum standards, local procedures and the performance management framework set by the National Board.
- To ensure that services are carried out in a timely and efficient way and based upon the assessed needs of those persons requiring a service.
- To ensure that those persons seeking approval as adoptive parents are welcomed without prejudice and delay and that their applications are considered on their individual merit.
- To develop a recruitment strategy which ensures a range of adoptive placements are available regionally or through external agencies to ensure timely placements for all children where the placement plan is adoption.
- To provide a child focussed placement service to ensure that children are appropriately matched with adopters who can meet their needs throughout their childhood.
- To provide a counselling service for birth parents and families affected by adoption.
- To provide a range of pre and post adoption support and intermediary services in conjunction with statutory and voluntary sector providers.
- To establish effective working links with key stakeholders and other collaboratives.
- To maintain effective working links with local authority Children's Services Departments to ensure that agency functions in relation to children requiring adoptive placements are maintained.
- To utilise and build upon examples of good practice within the region and promote consistency, excellence and continuous improvement.
- To comply with the requirements of external audit and inspection.
- To ensure that customer feedback and the views of services users are obtained and considered in the development of the Collaborative.

### Scope:

The Regional Collaborative will be responsible for:

- All functions associated with the recruitment, training, assessment and support of prospective adopters. This includes inter-country adopters, step-parent and relative adopters.
- The provision of a family finding, linking and matching service for all children requiring adoptive placements.
- The provision of a range of adoption support services for children, birth parents and adoptive families pre and post adoption. This function also includes the provision of counselling for adopted persons seeking access to their birth records and the provision of an intermediary service for persons seeking to trace adopted persons.

The Regional Collaborative will not be responsible for the following functions as these will be retained by each individual local authority:

- The assessment, care planning and review of children in need and referred and placed for adoption.
- Maintaining the functions of the Agency Decision Maker in respect of children requiring a should be adopted decision.
- Assessing the support needs of children requiring adoption.
- Responsibility for the choice of adoptive placement and working with the family finder in matching the child with the prospective adopters.

### 3. Current Service Profile

This section of the business case sets out the current position of each council – highlighting the staffing, service delivery, budgets, ICT and premises information. This baseline is important to establish in order to know from where the collaborative originates and to be able to plan accordingly.

#### 3.1 Current Organisational Structure

Across the four authorities, the following staffing arrangements are in place.

Job Title	Cardiff FTE	RCT FTE	Merthyr FTE	VOGC FTE	Total FTE
Service Manager	0.3	0.4	0.2	0.3	1.2
Team Manager	1.5	1.0	0.5	0.3	3.3
Practitioner Manager	0	0	0	1.0	1.0
Senior Practitioner	0	1.95	0.5	0	2.45
Social Worker	6.3	5.0	0.75	2.0	14.05
Support Worker	0	0	0.75	0	0.75
Business Support	3.0	1.57	0.33	0.75	5.65
<b>Total</b>	<b>11.10</b>	<b>9.92</b>	<b>3.03</b>	<b>4.35</b>	<b>28.4</b>

The functions of these posts are described as follows:

Role	Description
<b>Service Manager</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To provide overall strategic and managerial responsibility for the service alongside other service areas.</li> </ul>
<b>Team Manager</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To provide day to day management of the team and service and supervision of staff. There are currently 2.5 FTEs with specific responsibility for adoption and 2 posts with responsibility for adoption and other service areas, equating to 0.8 adoption FTEs.</li> </ul>
<b>Practitioner Manager/Senior Practitioner</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is 1 FTE Practitioner Manager who supervises staff and takes delegated responsibility for the management of the team alongside carrying a caseload.</li> <li>There are 2.45 FTE Senior Practitioners who manage specific aspects of the team's work/ chair meetings etc. and carry a caseload.</li> </ul>
<b>Social Worker</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are 14.05 FTE Social Workers who are all qualified and have at least three years post qualifying experience which is required for adoption. They all have generic caseloads and perform all functions of the adoption service.</li> </ul>
<b>Support Worker</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is 1.00 FTE unqualified post which supports the Fostering and Adoption team undertaking practical duties, managing the letterbox scheme. 0.75 FTE of this post is deployed in adoption.</li> </ul>
<b>Business Support</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are 5.65 FTE Business Support staff that perform a range of administrative duties to support the work of the teams, including the administration of four Adoption Panels on a monthly basis.</li> </ul>

### 3.2 Current Service Users

Service delivery information has been collated between 01/04/2010 to 31/03/2013 for each respective authority and has been categorised as follows:

- Referrals of children requiring adoptive placements and their progression to a placement order and subsequent placement.
- Recruitment/Assessment of potential adopters from enquiry to approval.
- Consideration of adoption support referrals

The following tables provide a summary of the key data outlined above:

#### Children on referral for Adoption

Local Authority	Year	Number of children referred to service for Adoption during year	Number of Placement Orders granted during year	Number of children placed for adoption during year	No. of Adoption Orders granted during year	Av. length of time from Placement Order to child being placed for adoption
Cardiff	01.04.2012 - 31.03.2013	83	52	17	15	7.5 months
	01.04.2011 - 31.03.2012	75	24	20	22	7.5 months
	01.04.2010 - 31.03.2011	45	25	16	20	8 months
Merthyr	01.04.2012 - 31.03.2013	22	17	6	16	6.57 months
	01.04.2011 - 31.03.2012	16	15	16	3	6.06 months
	01.04.2010 - 31.03.2011	26	9	6	13	5.4 months
RCT	01.04.2012 - 31.03.2013	94	53	39	47	8 Months
	01.04.2011 - 31.03.2012	55	59	42	33	7 Months
	01.04.2010 - 31.03.2011	109	43	31	28	7 Months
V of G	01.04.2012 - 31.03.2013	10	15	10	5	8.4 months
	01.04.2011 - 31.03.2012	16	9	5	6	8 months
	01.04.2010 - 31.03.2011	11	4	5	9	9.5 months

#### Recruitment / Assessment of Adopters

Local Authority	Year	Number of initial enquiries received	Number of applications received	Av. timescales for completion of assessments (PAR) & approval at panel	Number of adopters approved
Cardiff	01.04.2012 - 31.03.2013	55	25	10 months	9
	01.04.2011 - 31.03.2012	57	17	16 months	5
	01.04.2010 - 31.03.2011	45	8	16 months	12
Merthyr	01.04.2012 - 31.03.2013	6	5	7 months	2
	01.04.2011 - 31.03.2012	10	10	7 months	8
	01.04.2010 - 31.03.2011	Data unavailable	Data unavailable	7 months	Data not available
RCT	01.04.2012 - 31.03.2013	33	22	5 months	22
	01.04.2011 - 31.03.2012	32	18	5 months	18
	01.04.2010 - 31.03.2011	33	14	6 months	14

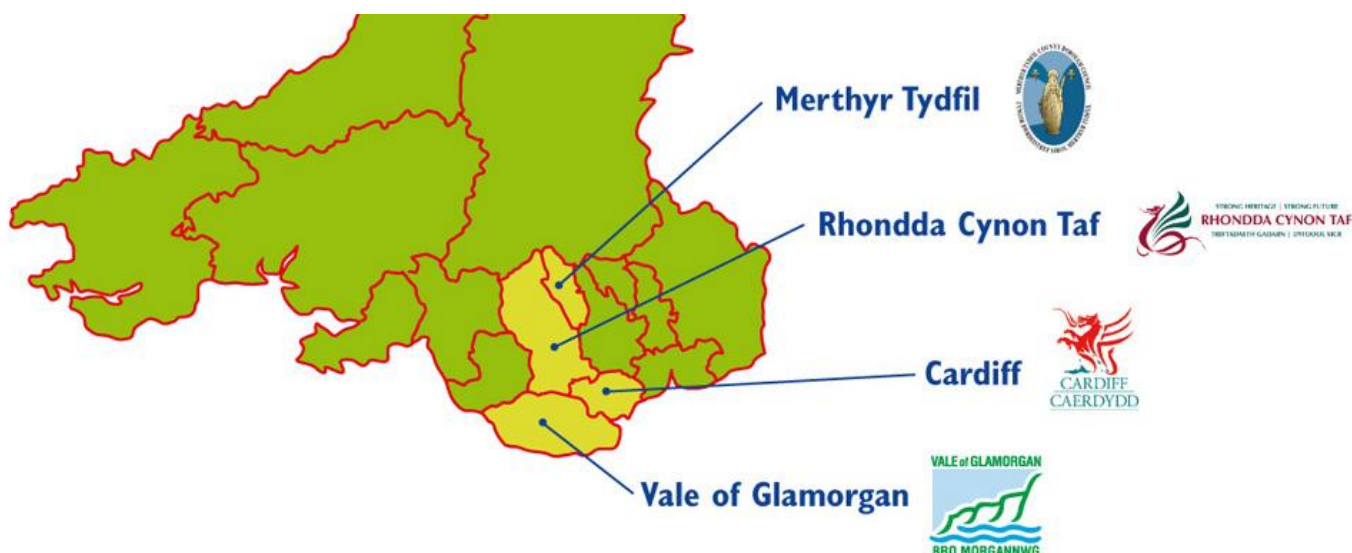
V of G	01.04.2012 - 31.03.2013	26	11	5-6 months	7
	01.04.2011 - 31.03.2012	20	12	6-8 months	8
	01.04.2010 - 31.03.2011	50	6	8-10 months	7

### Adoption Support / Post Adoption Support Services

Local Authority	Year	No. requests / referrals received for birth parent / family counselling	No. requests / referrals received for intermediary services	Number of referrals for adoption support received requesting both financial & practical support
Cardiff	01.04.2012 - 31.03.2013	83	23	106
	01.04.2011 - 31.03.2012	75	35	110
	01.04.2010 - 31.03.2011	45	14	59
Merthyr	01.04.2012 - 31.03.2013	9	2	11
	01.04.2011 - 31.03.2012	Data not available	Data not available	Data not available
	01.04.2010 - 31.03.2011	Data not available	Data not Available	Data not available
RCT	01.04.2012 - 31.03.2013	13	16	29
	01.04.2011 - 31.03.2012	18	18	36
	01.04.2010 - 31.03.2011	20	9	29
V of G	01.04.2012 - 31.03.2013	10	4	14
	01.04.2011 - 31.03.2012	10	5	15
	01.04.2010 - 31.03.2011	9	4	13

### 3.3 Current Geographic areas

The service is currently delivered across the four regional areas.





The following provides an indication of the total size of each area, in absolute population terms and also in terms of each authority's LAC population.

<b>Demographic make up</b>	<b>Cardiff</b>	<b>RCT</b>	<b>Merthyr</b>	<b>VOGC</b>
Average overall population between 31/03/2011 to 31/03/2013	348,548	235,362	58,923	126,890
Average overall LAC population between 31/03/2011 to 31/03/2013	549	589	180	200
LAC as % of Overall Population	0.16%	0.25%	0.31%	0.16%

It can be seen that there is a higher % of LAC population in RCT and Merthyr and therefore a higher demand for the service.

### 3.4 Current Budget

The combined 2014/15 net budgets for the adoption service of the four councils equates to £2.4 million. This is broken down over the authorities as follows:

<b>Budget for the Year 2014/15</b>	<b>Cardiff £000</b>	<b>RCT £000</b>	<b>Merthyr £000</b>	<b>VOGC £000</b>	<b>TOTAL £000</b>
Staff Costs	416	391	130	192	1,129
Other Staff Costs	9	8	5	6	28
Running Costs	29	42	9	5	85
Panel Costs	18	13	10	6	47
Adoption Support	37	24	13	20	94
Adoption Allowances	179	116	74	110	479
Agency Fees (Net)	207	132	129	102	570
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>895</b>	<b>726</b>	<b>370</b>	<b>441</b>	<b>2,432</b>

### 3.5 Current ICT

ICT arrangements vary across the region as follows:

<b>IT Infrastructure</b>	<b>Cardiff</b>	<b>RCT</b>	<b>Merthyr</b>	<b>VOGC</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Software	Care First (OLM) Spreadsheets	Swift (Northgate) Spreadsheets	Swift (Northgate) Spreadsheets	Swift (Northgate) Spreadsheets	Supplementary information on adopters recorded on spreadsheets
Hardware	Fat and thin client (terminal)	Fat and thin client (Citrix) Laptops and	Fat client Laptops and PCs	Fat client Laptops and PCs	

	server) Laptops, PCs and terminals	PCs			
Hosting arrangements	Locally hosted network infrastructure	Locally hosted network infrastructure	Locally hosted network infrastructure	Locally hosted network infrastructure	

### 3.6 Current Information Governance

All participating authorities are subject to the provisions of the Data Protection Act and the Human Rights Act and have their own local policies in relation to Information Governance. Each respective authority is signed up to WASPI (Wales Accord for the Sharing of Personal Information).

### 3.7 Current Buildings

Each authority has a dedicated team which operates from premises within their respective geographic boundaries as follows:

Details of current premises	Address Details	Whole or part of building (W or P)	Lease or owned (L or O)
Cardiff	Operates from 1 site St Mellons Family Centre, Heol Maes Eirwg, St Mellons, Cardiff	Px1	Ox1
RCT	Operates from 1 site: Ty Pennant, Catherine Street, Pontypridd	Px1	L
Merthyr	Operates from 1 site: Triangle Business Park Pentrebach, Merthyr Tydfil	Px1	Ox1
VOGC	Operates from 1 site: Dock Offices, Barry	Px1	Ox1

#### **4. Progress to date**

Good progress has been made to date in establishing the Regional Collaborative.

For example, a number of technical groups have been established to look at key areas which the Collaborative will need to address in order to proceed. These are Finance, Human Resources, Legal, ICT and Information Governance and comprise specialist officers from each respective authority.

As the Collaborative progresses information is fed back to the Steering Group which consists of Heads of Service from each respective authority. Thereafter, as the Collaborative has developed and reached milestones, each local authority's Senior Management structure and Executive has been updated via formal reports.

In addition to these activities, staff engagement via union consultation, workshops and presentations has been undertaken and will continue.

## 5. Service Delivery Models – Options Appraisal

During 2013 an analysis of service need was carried out in order to identify the most appropriate operating model for the new service.

Analysis of arrangements in each respective authority was undertaken which included looking at the structure of each service from a staffing and service user perspective. Some of the data used to inform this work is set out in the sections above.

In order to find a service delivery model which would meet the objectives of the National Adoption Service, the following principles were used to identify a range of possible models:

- The needs of service users are met and the best outcomes achieved within the resources available;
- Resources are focused upon specific areas of service delivery where necessary;
- A unified service is provided across the Collaborative which is not fragmented and complements the National Adoption Service;
- Effective links are maintained with local teams;
- Staff are engaged and utilised to their full potential, making the most of their knowledge and skills base.

In meeting these principles, the project would provide:

- improved service delivery, efficiency and outcomes;
- a service designed to meet the needs of its users;
- a more accessible, responsive service which reduces delay.

As a result of this analysis, a range of potential models of service delivery were identified. These options were presented to the Heads of Service and at workshops with managers and staff in the respective authorities during November and December 2013. The models were discussed and identified through their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT Analysis).

	<b>Option Description</b>	<b>Advantages</b>	<b>Disadvantages</b>
0	<b>Do Nothing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Little disruption to service and staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would not be congruent with the requirements of a collaborative and the model developed by ADSS for the National Adoption Service.</li> <li>• Current service deficits would be maintained.</li> <li>• Current service demands would not be met in a timely way.</li> <li>• The status quo would be maintained and this has already been determined as unsatisfactory.</li> </ul>
1	<b>Restructure service into a co-located functional</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promotes regional identity and concept of one service which is</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By specialist teams there is a risk of de-skilling staff.</li> </ul>

	<p><b>service model of 3 teams; Recruitment &amp; Assessment, Family Finding , Adoption Support</b></p>	<p>in line with the National Adoption Service.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides an equitable, focussed service to improve customer outcomes.</li> <li>• Streamline service delivery making it easier to measure performance.</li> <li>• Offers opportunities for innovative ways of working.</li> <li>• Provides an opportunity for knowledge sharing.</li> <li>• Promotes greater flexibility within the service and across the teams.</li> <li>• Pooling of resources provides longer term financial and service delivery benefits.</li> <li>• Provides one central management point.</li> <li>• Provides greater opportunities for service users to obtain desired outcomes.</li> <li>• Ensures that service users will be provided with a dedicated service that will be more efficient in terms of expertise and reaching objectives.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local links may be lost.</li> </ul>
2	<p><b>Restructure service into two generic geographical north and south teams.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Largely maintains status quo.</li> <li>• Provides least disruption and may be easier to implement.</li> <li>• Would mirror LHB footprint.</li> <li>• Allows more flexible use of resources if workload fluctuates.</li> <li>• Retains links between functions and local teams.</li> <li>• Provides equitable workload between 2 teams.</li> <li>• Provides overall management point.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would lack regional identity, cohesion and focus and would not fit well with the National Adoption Service.</li> <li>• Performance outcomes would be difficult to measure.</li> <li>• More difficult to standardise practice.</li> <li>• Current deficits would be maintained and adoption support would not be prioritised.</li> <li>• The identity of the Regional Collaborative might be difficult to maintain collectively due to the North /South divide.</li> </ul>
3	<p><b>Restructure service into geographical/functional teams and separate adoption support function.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incorporates the positives of the other models.</li> <li>• Provides opportunities for close working with local team.</li> <li>• Strengthens collaborative</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lacks cohesion and more difficult to promote collaboration across the region.</li> <li>• Lack of regional identity.</li> </ul>

		<p>working between family finding and recruitment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allows for different service options in relation to adoption support.</li> <li>• Provides overall management point.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consistency of practice may be more difficult to attain given number of teams and different management points.</li> <li>• Collation of data for performance may be more difficult to attain.</li> <li>• Concerns not meeting objectives of National Adoption Service due to the issues in relation to cohesion and identity outlined above.</li> <li>• Concerns that providing data for performance may be more difficult from a unified perspective to achieve.</li> <li>• Difficult to sustain number of management points for staff numbers.</li> </ul>
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There was considerable discussion in relation to which option would be best placed to meet the requirements of the Collaborative. **Option 1** was judged by all to be the most suitable and would best meet the needs and outcomes desired for the Collaborative from the resources available.

It was considered that Option 1 would be best disposed to develop a regional identity in line with the National Adoption Service objectives. The delivery to service users from dedicated functional specialist teams would provide a co-ordinated, integrated response. Functional specialist teams were generally recognised as potentially offering the most efficient service to its users. Therefore, it is anticipated that this option would best address the current service deficits by improving timescales for recruiting adopters and placing children; this being the ultimate objective of the National Adoption Service within the resources available.

In terms of the potential issues with Option 1, it was felt these could be mitigated with effective management and clear and defined communication channels to ensure effective links with local teams. There is a risk of de-skilling staff, which it is considered can be overcome and taken into account when drafting the job descriptions and by considering how the service will function operationally. It is acknowledged that there will need to be flexibility within the service to mitigate the risk of de-skilling and to respond to fluctuations in service demands.

In adopting Option 1, a series of changes and associated benefits will be realised as summarised in the following:

Change	Benefit
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All assessments of prospective adopters will be undertaken by the Collaborative.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Single point of contact with more timely response and standardised practice.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Collaborative will receive all requests for adoption placements and undertake to find an appropriate match.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greater placement choice and more timely response reducing delay.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All Panel functions will be co-ordinated from the Collaborative.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing more flexibility and reducing Panel waiting time.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All requests for birth parent counselling to be provided by the Collaborative.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Providing a service independent of the case manager in line with requirements.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Assessments of adoption support needs to be undertaken by the Collaborative.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Standardising practice and outcomes for children.</li></ul>

Option 1 was presented to Directors in May 2014, and included as the service structure presented to each respective authority's Cabinet in July 2014.

The business case has been prepared on the basis of implementing this option.

## 6. Implementation

Implementing the Regional Collaborative will involve the coordination of a number of activities and has implications for each partner organisation.

The following sets out the proposed implementation approach and the implications associated with the project for each authority and the Collaborative as a whole, including:

- Staffing Implications & Service Delivery Model
- Financial Implications
- Legal Implications – Governance
- Property Implications
- ICT Implications
- Project Resources & Governance

### 6.1 Staffing Implications & Service Delivery Model

#### Transfer of Undertaking Regulations (TUPE)

In order to deliver the collaborative arrangements it is proposed that all staff within scope of the project would transfer to the host (employing) authority and as such this authority (along with operational aspects of the Collaboration) would be responsible for the management of staff. Staff would therefore be transferred to the host's employment under the Transfer of Undertaking Regulations and/or the Public Sector Codes of Practice governing services changes within the public sector.

It is the intention that staff would transfer to the host's employment at the same time as transferring to a new work location and it is anticipated that the target implementation date is 1<sup>st</sup> March 2015. Wherever possible, the terms and conditions of staff will be maintained. Upon transfer the only changes for staff will be the change of workplace and the change in employer. It should be noted there may be other changes that are necessary for a variety of reasons. For example, payroll dates/periods may change. In regards to any such changes these issues will be considered in consultation with the unions and staff in advance of the transfer.

At the date of transfer staff will be working under their current job titles and roles however it is anticipated that the geographic boundaries for their service users will have changed. It is proposed that there will be a "bedding in" period where information can be shared between staff and relationships can be developed within the workforce. During this period staff and the recognised trade unions will also be formally consulted specifically in relation to the proposed re-organisation which is anticipated to support the Collaborative in order to meet the objectives of the National Adoption Service.

#### Reorganisation

In order to deliver the most efficient and effective collaborative service, a reorganisation of staff is proposed to implement three teams specialising in the designated functional areas. The merger of the functions from the respective authorities indicates from analysis undertaken to date that there is some work which is currently duplicated in each authority. Whilst there will be an increase in the aggregate number of service users, the reduction in relation to the aspects of duplication is considered to be necessary together with the changing of how the service is carried out



operationally. On the basis of current staffing levels within each respective authority, it is deemed unlikely that there will be staff displacement and it is expected there should be sufficient roles for all currently employed staff that are in scope for the transfer. The changes relate to operational and organisational issues designed to ensure an efficient and appropriately dedicated service within the respective areas of expertise.

Whilst formal consultation on the reorganisation will commence following the transfer of staff to assist the transition, explanatory discussions with staff and the unions have taken place and will continue to do so.

The proposed service delivery model is shown in Appendix 1. The table below lists the proposed job titles, together with a brief explanation of what the roles will entail and how many FTEs will be available. Job descriptions are being drafted and finalised in order to meet the requirements of the Collaborative in accordance with Option 1.

<b>Post</b>	<b>Description of post and changes</b>	<b>No of FTEs</b>
<b>Regional Adoption Manager</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This is a new post which provides overall operational and strategic leadership and management of the regional collaborative.</li> </ul>	1.0
<b>Managers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To manage the specific functional teams and supervise the Social Work staff.</li> </ul>	2.5
<b>Social Workers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Responsible for carrying out all the functions of the adoption collaborative, roles being defined and formed to accommodate the specific functional teams set out in Option 1.</li> </ul>	16.0
<b>Business Support Manager</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This is a new post responsible for managing the business support functions of the new service, line managing the business support staff and managing the performance management reporting system.</li> </ul>	1.0
<b>Business Support Staff</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To support the business functions of the service.</li> </ul>	4.0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>24.5</b>

Further detail in relation to reorganisation and the job descriptions are currently being finalised and will be an on-going part of consultation processes throughout the development and early stages of implementation of the project.

The following describes the rationale for and provides further detail of the roles within the proposed structure.

- Regional Adoption Manager

Given the nature of the Collaborative and its accountability to each respective authority and the National Adoption Service, it is considered necessary for a new management post which will be responsible for the Collaborative to be developed. This proposed post (known as the Regional Adoption Manager (RAM)) is a new post and distinct from existing posts within the respective local authorities. It will be dedicated to ensuring overall that the Collaborative meets its aims and objectives as driven by the National Adoption Service.

- Managers

Senior management roles from the current structures in each respective local authority are not considered relevant to the proposals as those service managers predominantly carry out functions which will remain in situ and are not adoption related. With the exception of the RAM post and the Business Support Manager post (BSM), the management posts within the new structure bear some similarities to the existing posts within each respective local authority referred to as Team Manager posts and also the Practitioner Manager/Senior Practitioner posts. Whilst there is some similarity there will be significant changes as it is expected that in the new structure the managers will be more specialised and focus primarily upon one area of service delivery.

- Social Workers

Within the new structure Social Workers will specialise in different aspects dependent upon which team they are working within. Unions and staff have been made aware of this and an invitation for staff to indicate areas of preference has already been extended in order to assist with the integration. Staff engagement will continue throughout the processes.

From analysis undertaken, the roles of Practitioner Manager/Senior Practitioner vary within each authority and indeed not all of the authorities hold such roles. Initial analysis suggests that these roles may not be appropriate under Option 1 and it is considered necessary to re-designate these posts to reflect the proposed structure. It is considered that many of the duties in these may be replicated within functions of Social Workers and Team Managers. Work is still being undertaken in relation to these aspects.

- Business Support Manager & Business Support Staff

With regards the business support functions, and as with other functions, there has been identification of overlaps of work between the current roles in the respective local authorities. Within the new service there would be a duplication of duties which in this particular area of function is considered most likely and can lead to a reduction in FTEs. Furthermore the increase in performance monitoring and analysis of work output that will be necessary in order to accommodate the Collaboration means that the nature of this work will, in part, need to change in emphasis. Whilst it is anticipated that there will be a reduction in business support FTEs, the proposed structure highlights the need for two new roles, one of which will be a BSM, who will be responsible for overall management of the business support function. It should be noted that this function will be increasing in importance given the number of reporting mechanisms which will be necessary.

### Appointments Process

Both the BSM and RAM posts require appointment prior to the Collaborative becoming fully operational. Therefore the date of transfer is determinable on the basis of the appointment to these two posts. The RAM post is a new position and will be ultimately responsible for the Regional Collaborative and will be reporting to the Joint Committee, Steering Group, respective authorities and the National Adoption Service. The role will be strategic and its primary objective will be to ensure the Collaborative maintains the requirements of the National Adoption Service. As part of consultation processes information in relation to this role is being shared with staff within the

respective adoption services of each local authority. A similar approach will be adopted for the appointment to the BSM post.

### Pensions

Following transfer the Pension Fund Administrator may need to change for some staff but they will remain members of the Local Government Pension Scheme and their service will be continuous. Work is on-going in relation to this and will be covered as part of the legal agreement.

### Performance Management

Not only does the National Adoption Service entail changes in working in order to meet aims and objectives, there are also new statutory requirements in relation to reporting on performance. In addition it is anticipated that each respective authority will require performance information to be reported back to their own organisations to meet their own performance monitoring requirements. As such there is anticipated to be a greater emphasis on this within the Collaborative and this has been taken into account within the proposed reorganisation.

### Working Arrangements and Location

In order to facilitate a Regional Collaborative in accordance with Option 1, it is considered necessary for all staff to be based at one central location in order to assist in facilitating the regional identity and concept of one service. Currently staff are based in their respective authority's buildings within the geographic boundaries.

At present, Ty Pennant within Rhondda Cynon Taff has been proposed as the site to locate the Collaborative. This site would mean drawing from resources already available as this is currently utilised by Rhondda Cynon Taff. In addition, the site is being considered for a variety of reasons however most relevant from a staffing perspective is that the location is seen to be the most equitable in terms of the geographic footprint of the Collaborative. This can be seen from the Current Geographic areas outlined above. This will mean that some staff will need to change their place of work and for some it may mean additional travelling. However, it is anticipated that as part of the working arrangements within Option 1 there will be a greater emphasis on agile working which may assist in minimising additional travel. Consultation with the Trade Unions and staff in regards to this change has already commenced.

## **6.2 Financial Implications**

Each authority has provided details of their current budget for adoption services. This information has been used to determine possible levels of budgets going forward, to act as a basis for apportionment of budgets between authorities and to discuss the approach to be taken for the varying types of expenditure incurred by the service.

### Implementation Costs

There will be implementation costs for the Collaborative of around £38,000 which will cover expenditure on IT, relocation, marketing and other peripheral costs. There will be the requirement to purchase new laptops, a new server and communication equipment. The project has been able to attract grant funding and therefore it is planned that these start-up costs will be met from this funding, however, expenditure will need to be incurred prior to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015.

These costs have been allocated to each authority on the basis of the % of existing staff budgets.

	<b>Cardiff (37.1%) £000</b>	<b>RCT (34.8%) £000</b>	<b>Merthyr (11.5%) £000</b>	<b>VOGC (16.6%) £000</b>	<b>TOTAL £000</b>
<b>One off Costs</b>	14	13	5	6	38

An assessment of the potential voluntary severance cost has been carried out and as previously outlined, it is unlikely that such costs will materialise.

#### Continuing Authority Costs

It has been agreed that during the initial operation of the Collaborative, certain areas of expenditure, while administered through the Collaborative, will be recharged directly to the originating authority. These areas are the most volatile and are where policies across authorities differ and where available budgets do not accurately reflect actual expenditure. These cover the following areas of expenditure:

- **Adoption Allowances**

Each authority has its own policy for the payment of allowances. It is the intention to develop one policy for the Collaborative, however, initially each authority will be charged for the actual allowances paid for its own children.

- **Adoption Support**

Currently, each authority assesses the support required on a case by case basis. A uniform policy will be developed for new children assessed by the Collaborative, however, initially each authority will be charged for the actual support paid for its own children.

- **Agency Fees**

These fees cover expenditure incurred i.e. when the new Regional Collaborative places one of its children with another provider outside the region and income is received when an authority outside the region places a child with an authority within the new region. Placements made within the new Collaborative will not be charged for. This is a very volatile area and is difficult to predict. With the introduction of the new regional structure across Wales and changes in the proposed inter authority charges, initially each authority will be liable for any cost to be paid or will receive income from agency fees for its own children/adopters.

Further discussion regarding the development of a formula for these areas of expenditure will be assessed once the Collaborative is up and running.

#### Contributions to Operating Costs

Indicative financial contributions towards the first year's operational costs of the Collaborative have been predicted and apportioned to each authority. Options for the method of apportionment were assessed and it was considered that for the majority of costs, the best way to reflect the available resource to be input was to use the % of existing staff budgets held by each authority as the basis for apportionment. The exception to this is Panel costs, which will be apportioned on the basis of the historic number of referrals to the adoption service in each authority.

A detailed breakdown of the proposed budget and the allocation of contributions from authorities is shown in Appendix 2. The following table provides a summary and compares the potential contribution by each authority to their currently available budget. It shows that cost could be around £19k less than existing budgets held by authorities.

Costs	TOTAL	Cardiff		Merthyr		RCT		VOG	
	£000	%	£000	%	£000	%	£000	%	£000
<b>Staff</b>	1,010	37.1	375	11.5	116	34.8	351	16.6	168
<b>Other Staff</b>	37	37.1	14	11.5	4	34.8	13	16.6	6
<b>Commissioning</b>	46	37.1	17	11.5	5	34.8	16	16.6	8
<b>Running</b>	117	37.1	43	11.5	14	34.8	41	16.6	19
<b>Panel</b>	30	37.9	11	10.2	3	44.6	14	7.3	2
<b>Hosting</b>	30	37.1	11	11.5	4	34.8	10	16.6	5
<b>Annual Cost</b>	1,270		471		146		445		208
<b>Current Budget</b>	1,289		472		154		454		209
<b>Over/(Under) Current Budget</b>	(19)		(1)		(8)		(9)		(1)

The projections currently show an overall saving, however, there will be an ongoing review once the service is operational, with an expectation of driving down costs further.

The following should be noted in relation to the projected costs:

- Staffing Costs

In costing the new staff structure, the top of scale of the Vale of Glamorgan pay rates for 2014/15 has been used plus an assumed 1% pay award. Staff will transfer across on their existing pay rates which may be lower than the Vale's rate so costs may be less than shown. 3 out of the 4 authorities currently include a vacancy factor of around 4% in their budgets. It is considered appropriate to continue this practice, however, an initial factor of 3% has been included in the budget, which could be reviewed and potentially increased once the Collaborative is operational.

- Other Staff Costs

Travel expenses have been calculated at current cost plus a 25% increase due to the need to relocate staff but this could reduce in the future.

- Commissioning Costs

It has been agreed to hold this budget for potentially commissioning services externally, instead of recruiting another member of staff. This option may change in the future once the service is operational and requirements can be fully assessed.

- Running Costs

This includes the rental cost for the new location in Rhondda Cynon Taff. There will be no on-going IT system costs as there is no increase above the current charge paid by the Vale of Glamorgan. It is

assumed that British Association for Adoption and Fostering (BAAF) membership will continue to be paid by each individual authority.

- Panel Costs

These are based on the new proposed rates for the region and the running of 30 panels per year across the region.

- Hosting Costs

As the host (employing) authority, the Vale of Glamorgan will be responsible for payment of all staff and non-staffing expenses and collection of income. The Collaborative will have its own Business Support staff that will be responsible for its own administration. Legal costs have been included to support panels but this support could be rotated to each authority. A small management fee has been included, which is in line with other collaboratives across Wales.

### Potential Additional Costs

The above reflects an authority's financial position through a comparison of the proposed contribution to the new Collaborative against existing departmental budgets. There are however further potential costs which will need to be assessed by each individual authority as a result of the transfer of the budget for part posts into the Collaborative, which will not materialise as a direct saving if that actual post is not within scope for the transfer. Part of these costs can be covered by the potential for underspends on the staff budget as detailed above.

## **6.3 Legal Implications**

### Governance

In considering how best to facilitate this Collaboration, consideration has been given to the various options available in terms of governance. These have included consideration of informal, secondment, contractual, delegation to another authority, corporate, and delegation to a joint Committee models.

Based on the previous experience of the councils working collaboratively it is proposed that this collaboration should operate on the basis of a joint committee. This was determined to be the most appropriate arrangement for a variety of reasons, but in particular taking account of the number of authorities and statutory functions involved it was considered to offer the most appropriate system for ensuring the Collaborative operates appropriately and within its remit

The Joint Committee model provides that the Council would delegate its functions relating to those adoption services in scope of this project to the Joint Committee. The Joint Committee has no separate legal identity and so cannot own property or enter into contracts in its own right. It is proposed that one authority (namely the Vale of Glamorgan Council) will act as the Host Authority and take responsibility for employment of the staff directly affected, enter any third party contracts required and provide all support services required.

If the Councils decide to proceed with the proposal it will be necessary for the Councils to conclude a formal agreement, sometimes referred to as a joint working agreement. This agreement will set out, amongst other things:

- the extent of the matters to be delegated to the Joint Committee, and any delegations to officers in the shared service;
- the constitutional set up of the Joint Committee and its terms of reference;
- It is proposed that each Authority would appoint two elected members to the Joint Committee. Decisions would be taken by vote and each authority would have one vote exercisable by their appointed elected members. The Chairperson would have a casting vote. The Chairperson would be one of the elected member representatives, appointed for 12 months, with the position of Chairperson allocated in turn to each authority in alphabetical order;
- the terms of reference and membership of the Officer Management Board;
- It is proposed that there would be an Officer Management Board that would support the Joint Committee and this would comprise one senior officer from each authority with responsibility for adoption services and the chief officer of the shared service;
- the termination and exit provisions;
- It is proposed that a party could withdraw from the arrangement on giving one year's notice expiring on the 31st March in any year. It should be noted that the intent is that no party would seek to withdraw within the first three years;
- the structure of the shared service, staffing proposals and pensions;
- which Council is to be the Host Authority, detail the services to be provided by the Host Authority, how related costs would be apportioned, and what indemnities the Host would seek from the other authorities in respect of carrying out its role;
- the financial management arrangements;
- the agreement would set out how costs are to be shared amongst the authorities, which is proposed as being based on the percentage of existing staff budgets held by each authority. The exception to this is Panel costs, which will be apportioned on the basis of the historic number of referrals to the adoption service in each authority;
- the Joint Committee's financial affairs would be "hosted" by the Host Authority, with that authority's chief finance officer taking responsibility for making payments, bookkeeping and so on. The Joint Committee would propose a budget for approval by the authorities and the report sets out the initial indicative financial commitment sought. The legal agreement will include the procedures to be followed for the apportionment of any over/underspend by the Collaborative and the implications for the individual authorities;
- contain provision to address matters such as disputes, variations, data protection and freedom of information.

### General legal implications

Given the scope of the Collaborative there are a number of legal implications involved in addition to the governance arrangements such as employment law, to property law, Data Protection, advice in relation to these different aspects is being provided as appropriate within the development stages of the Collaborative.

### Information Governance

Strategic provision for Information Governance including data protection/freedom of information and records management will be taken account of in the agreement between the respective authorities. A joint authority working group has been established to consider the practical

implementation of these issues. A privacy impact assessment is being developed. An Information Sharing Protocol for the Collaborative may be required depending on work flows. Consideration is currently being given to the host's policies on data protection. Information Governance training will be required for staff within the Collaborative.

#### **6.4 Property Implications**

Ideally, the Collaborative would wish to occupy accommodation on flexible terms to allow the new service to review their accommodation requirements as the service develops. Therefore it is felt in addition to locating a site which is considered well positioned between the geographical footprint of the respective authorities; flexibility in terms of the lease/licence arrangement is desirable.

The Collaborative has considered various options for accommodating the service. Various locations have been considered such as County Hall, Cardiff and Ty Pennant, Pontypridd (RCT lease office accommodation). Inspections and consideration of terms and conditions has also been undertaken. Currently it is anticipated that the accommodation at Pontypridd, on balance, may be the most favourable option in terms of location and service delivery. The Terms and Conditions for occupying the office accommodation have not yet been finalised and are subject to ongoing discussions and negotiation between Estates /Legal Officers of the respective Authorities.

#### **6.5 ICT Implications**

Following an appraisal of a range of options including the Swift system (used by three of the authorities), Care First (used by the fourth council) and a commercial system, it has been concluded that the development of the Swift system for the adoption process was the most viable and cost effective solution.

Representatives from each of the four authorities will be involved in the ICT development process. The Vale of Glamorgan is to host the system within their current infrastructure. Staff within the Collaborative who do not currently have access to the Vale's network will be set up with Vale network access, which will include an e-mail account and access to the Swift adoption system. Members of the service, without existing Vale equipment, will be issued with laptops or PCs, depending on their role. Vale of Glamorgan ICT will arrange the installation of a Vale "hub" at the site in RCT, to access Vale network systems.

Arrangements will need to be put in place for staff to gain access to systems in their originating authority.

#### **6.6 Project Resources and Governance**

In order to deliver the project access to and commitment from corporate resources colleagues from a number of departments including HR, ICT, Information Governance, Legal and Finance will be required.

The project manager is currently seconded until end November 2014 and this arrangement will require review by the Steering Group. The project governance arrangements made up of the Steering Group reporting to each authority will also continue for the duration of the project.



## 8. Achievability – Project Plan

In line with statutory requirements for the Collaborative to be operational as soon as possible, in consultation with the Steering Group and with reference to each respective authority's Executive, the implementation timetable is described in the following plan:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
Sept 2013	Project Manager appointed	To successfully establish the Regional Collaborative
Sept/Dec 2013	Analysis and further collection of data in relation to the proposals in order to progress the proposed Collaborative	Completed
Oct/Nov 2013	Drafting and circulation of reports for executive consideration (Cabinet etc.) in accordance with each respective authority's internal accounting mechanisms	Completed
Nov/Dec 2013	Presentations /workshops engaging staff in process to ascertain further information and exchange views, ideas and concepts	Completed
Jan 2014/ March 2014	Development of service specification for Collaborative	Completed
Feb 2014	Establishment of specialist technical groups comprising of officers from each respective authority	Completed
April 2014	Finalise consideration of service delivery model and governance arrangements	Completed
May 2014	Accumulation of HR data	On-going
May 2014	Further development of service delivery model and governance arrangements	On-going
June 2014	Commencement of drafting agreement underpinning arrangement between respective authorities, drafting Cabinet Report for utilisation within respective authorities	On-going
July 2014	Obtain each respective authority's executive approval to proceed with Collaborative in principle	Completed
July 2014	Accommodation options to be explored	On-going
August 2014	Commence more formal consultation with unions and staff	On-going
August 2014	Develop EIA	On-going
August 2014	Determination of in-scope staff	Completed
Sept 2014	Prepare financial data re costings etc.	On-going
Sept 2014	Compilation of Job Descriptions etc.	On-going
Sept 2014	Determine ICT arrangements for Collaborative	Completed
October 2014	Consideration of records management and archiving arrangements	On-going
October 2014	Preparation of further Cabinet Report	On-going
From Nov 2014 to	Staff data finalised, measures letters sent, lease	On-going

transfer date	for premises secured, ICT support finalised, Legal Agreement in place, Information Governance systems in place, all systems in place for commencement of Collaboration, advert and recruitment to RAM and BSM	
01/02/15 estimate	Commencement of Collaboration	
Feb 2015	Bedding in period and consultation re organisation for staff	
March 2015	Reorganisation Implementation	

## 9. Risks and Issues Log

As with all projects of this nature, regular monitoring of risks and issues will be vital in ensuring a smooth transition to a service that meets the objectives set out in this business case on time and on budget.

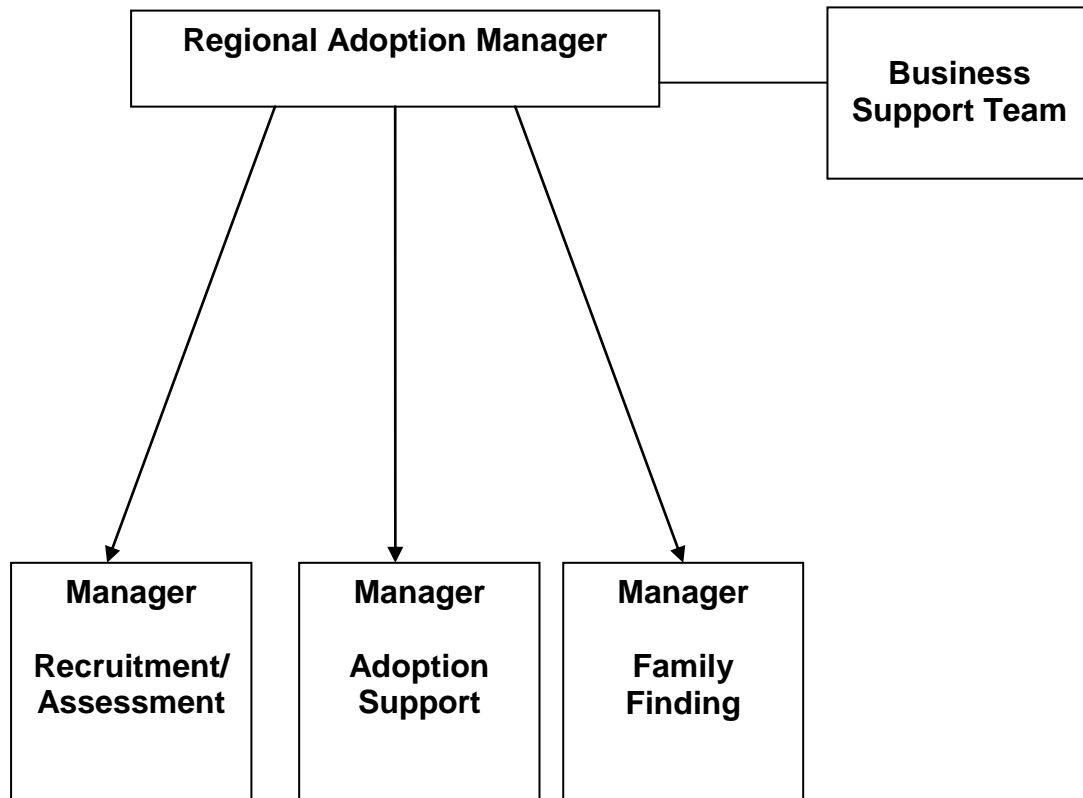
The following project level risks and issues have been identified and actions are being taken:

Ref	Description	Impact	Probability	Action Being Taken
R1	The timescale set by Welsh Government for the collaborative to be operational is challenging and due to the number of tasks required it may mean that there service will not be delivered on time.	High	High	Project plan to be kept under review and timescales adjusted if required.
R 2	The need to maintain service delivery and minimise disruption for service users.	High	Medium	Services to be continued until new structure in place, develop collaborative practice incrementally.
R3	Securing an appropriate and cost effective base for the Collaborative may be difficult.	High	Medium	Ascertain what suitable accommodation may be available within the four authorities.
R4	The staff consultation and HR process may highlight issues which may delay restructure.	High	Medium	Effective consultation to take place enabling staff to make informed choices.
R5	Some financial constraints may be highlighted by servicing the Collaborative.	High	Medium	Service to be fully costed and budget kept under review.
R6	Information Governance	High	Medium	Appropriate technical and organisational security measures must be put in place.
R7	Accommodation not being available on acceptable terms and conditions to house the new service	High	Low/ Medium	Negotiations to continue to ensure acceptable agreement reached.
R8	Currently further information awaited regarding financial aspects of staff changing pension fund	High	Low/ Medium	As this is an inter authority collaboration and two of the authorities are already in the same funds the risk is currently believed to be small but further information is awaited in this regard.
R9	Ability to appoint to RAM and BSM posts may delay the transfer date	High	High /Medium	Approval from the respective authority

				Executives to proceed with the appointment to these roles.
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**APPENDIX 1a**  
*(to the Business Case)*

**PROPOSED SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL**



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## FIRST YEAR INDICATIVE BUDGET

	TOTAL	Cardiff		Merthyr Tydfil		Rhondda Cynon Taf		Vale of Glamorgan	
	£	%	£	%	£	%	£	%	£
<b>Staff</b>									
<b>Based on % of Existing Staff Budgets</b>	<b>1,040,640</b>	<b>37.1%</b>	<b>386,077</b>	<b>11.5%</b>	<b>119,674</b>	<b>34.8%</b>	<b>362,143</b>	<b>16.6%</b>	<b>172,746</b>
Vacancy Factor @ 3%	-31,219		-11,582		-3,590		-10,864		-5,182
<b>Total Staff Costs</b>	<b>1,009,421</b>		<b>374,495</b>		<b>116,083</b>		<b>351,278</b>		<b>167,564</b>
<b>Other Staff Costs</b>									
<b>Based on % of Existing Staff Budgets</b>									
Travel Expenses/Hire of Vehicles	36,089	37.1%	13,389	11.5%	4,150	34.8%	12,559	16.6%	5,991
Training	4,000	37.1%	1,484	11.5%	460	34.8%	1,392	16.6%	664
Training - SCDWP Grant	-4,000	37.1%	-1,484	11.5%	-460	34.8%	-1,392	16.6%	-664
Mobiles/Phones	968	37.1%	359	11.5%	111	34.8%	337	16.6%	161
<b>Total Other Staff Costs</b>	<b>37,057</b>		<b>13,748</b>		<b>4,262</b>		<b>12,896</b>		<b>6,151</b>
<b>Commissioning Budget</b>	<b>46,108</b>	<b>37.1%</b>	<b>17,106</b>	<b>11.5%</b>	<b>5,302</b>	<b>34.8%</b>	<b>16,046</b>	<b>16.6%</b>	<b>7,654</b>
<b>Based on % of Existing Staff Budgets</b>									
<b>Running Costs</b>									
<b>Based on % of Existing Staff Budgets</b>									
Premises Rental	34,000	37.1%	12,614	11.5%	3,910	34.8%	11,832	16.6%	5,644
Training (Adopters)	18,000	37.1%	6,678	11.5%	2,070	34.8%	6,264	16.6%	2,988
Advertising/Marketing	52,300	37.1%	19,403	11.5%	6,015	34.8%	18,200	16.6%	8,682
Intermediary	1,000	37.1%	371	11.5%	115	34.8%	348	16.6%	166
Adoption UK	2,500	37.1%	928	11.5%	288	34.8%	870	16.6%	415
Tracemart License	379	37.1%	141	11.5%	44	34.8%	132	16.6%	63
Printing & Stationery/Postage	9,000	37.1%	3,339	11.5%	1,035	34.8%	3,132	16.6%	1,494
<b>Total Running Costs</b>	<b>117,179</b>		<b>43,473</b>		<b>13,476</b>		<b>40,778</b>		<b>19,452</b>
<b>Panel Costs</b>									
<b>Based on % of Referrals</b>									
Panel Fees & Expenses	27,000	37.9%	10,233	10.2%	2,754	44.6%	12,042	7.3%	1,971
Training (Panel Members)	3,000	37.9%	1,137	10.2%	306	44.6%	1,338	7.3%	219
<b>Total Panel Costs</b>	<b>30,000</b>		<b>11,370</b>		<b>3,060</b>		<b>13,380</b>		<b>2,190</b>
<b>Hosting Costs</b>									
<b>Based on % of Existing Staff Budgets</b>									
Legal	20,000	37.1%	7,420	11.5%	2,300	34.8%	6,960	16.6%	3,320
Finance/Creditors/Debtors/HR	5,000	37.1%	1,855	11.5%	575	34.8%	1,740	16.6%	830
Management	5,000	37.1%	1,855	11.5%	575	34.8%	1,740	16.6%	830
<b>Total Hosting Costs</b>	<b>30,000</b>		<b>11,130</b>		<b>3,450</b>		<b>10,440</b>		<b>4,980</b>
<b>ANNUAL COSTS</b>	<b>1,269,765</b>		<b>471,323</b>		<b>145,633</b>		<b>444,818</b>		<b>207,991</b>
<b>CURRENT BUDGETS</b>	<b>1,289,418</b>		<b>472,787</b>		<b>153,760</b>		<b>454,162</b>		<b>208,709</b>
<b>INCREASE/(DECREASE) TO CURRENT BUDGET</b>	<b>-19,653</b>		<b>-1,464</b>		<b>-8,127</b>		<b>-9,344</b>		<b>-718</b>

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