

## Wiltshire Council

### Cabinet

Date of meeting: 22 July 2014

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**Subject:** Adoption Agency Six Month Report

**Cabinet member:** Councillor Laura Mayes  
Children's Services

**Key Decision:** No

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#### **Executive Summary**

The purpose of the report is to ensure that Wiltshire Council Cabinet is satisfied that the adoption agency is effective and achieving good outcomes for children, young people and service users. Wiltshire Council is an Ofsted-registered Adoption Agency.

This six monthly written report on the management, outcomes and financial state of the adoption agency is a statutory requirement and covers the period 1 October 2013 to 31 March 2014.

In March 2013, Wiltshire Council's Adoption Service was subject to Ofsted inspection. The overall effectiveness of the service was judged to be adequate.

The number of adoption orders granted increased from 14 in 2012/13 to 40 in 2013/14 and the number of adopters approved increased from 26 in 2012/13 to 40 in 2013/14.

A number of significant incentives and changes have been implemented within the service in response to the continuing focus on adoption reform. Against a backdrop of continuing change and development, the service has improved its performance and risen to the challenges posed by the adoption reform agenda.

#### **Proposal(s)**

It is recommended that the contents of this report are noted and accepted.

#### **Reason for Proposal**

The 2011 Statutory Adoption Guidance and the 2011 Adoption Minimum Standards place a requirement on local authority adoption services to ensure that Wiltshire Council Cabinet is satisfied that the Adoption Agency is effective; achieving good outcomes for children, young people and service users; and complying with the conditions of registration.

#### **Terence Herbert, Associate Director**

Child, Youth, 0-25 SEN/Disabilities, Children and Families Social Care

## **Wiltshire Council**

### **Cabinet**

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### **Purpose of Report**

1. The purpose of the report is to ensure that Wiltshire Council Cabinet is satisfied that the adoption agency is effective and achieving good outcomes for children, young people and service users. The report will also satisfy Wiltshire Council Cabinet that the adoption agency is complying with the conditions of registration (Minimum Standard 25.6; Statutory Adoption Guidance 3.93 and 5.39).
2. This six monthly written report on the management, outcomes and financial state of the adoption agency is a requirement of the 2011 Statutory Adoption Guidance and the 2011 Adoption Minimum Standards.
3. The report covers the period 1 October 2013 to 31 March 2014.
4. It is recommended that the contents of this report are noted and accepted.

### **Relevance to the Council's Business Plan**

5. The Wiltshire Council Adoption Service is a central priority for Wiltshire Council's as set out in the Wiltshire Council Business Plan 2013-2017 to key priority to protect those who are most vulnerable. Key actions in the Business Plan include:
  - To develop an outstanding adoption service for all children for whom adoption is in their best interests
  - To work with our voluntary sector partners to streamline the adoption process, increase the number of adopters and make sure all adopters are well prepared and supported and involve children and adopters in shaping the adoption service

### **Background**

6. Wiltshire Council is an Ofsted-registered Adoption Agency. The Adoption Service provides permanency through timely and quality adoption for the children and young people in Wiltshire who need to be adopted.

7. The overall requirement of the service is for children and young people will be adopted by families who have been assessed and approved as suitable to providing a secure, warm, safe and supportive environment in which children and young people can develop in all aspects of their lives.
8. The Adoption Service:
  - Provides a range of safe, secure and enduring adoption placements to meet the assessed needs of children and young people needing permanent placements in order to promote and safeguard their welfare.
  - Ensures that adoption placements promote stability and positive outcomes for children and young people by working in partnership with adopted children and young people, adoptive parents, birth families and other professionals in the adoption and adoption support processes.
  - Meets the timescales set out in The Children Act 1989, Statutory Adoption Guidance revised in February 2011 and the Adoption National Minimum Standards. Specifically to ensure the time taken to place a child for adoption from the point that the child comes into the care of the local authority meets regulatory timescales.
9. The work of the Adoption Agency is underpinned by the Adoption and Children Act 2002 and the 2005 regulations informed by this Act. The aim of the Act is to improve outcomes for children needing adoption.
10. In March 2013, Wiltshire Council's Adoption Service was subject to Ofsted inspection. The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service and to consider how well it complies with the relevant regulations and meets the national minimum standards. The overall effectiveness of the service was judged to be adequate. The 6 recommendations made following the inspection have been completed. The Ofsted recommendations and actions taken are included as appendix 1.
11. The Adoption Agency annual report was presented to Cabinet on 17 December 2013 updating Cabinet on the performance of the Adoption Agency for the period 1 April 2013 to 30 September 2013.
12. Cabinet noted that year on year data indicated a significant increase in the numbers of children deemed suitable for adoption, rising from 15 in 2010/2011 to 38 in 2012/2013 and that the age of children being adopted was reducing.
13. An increase in applications to adopt was attributed to successful recruitment and timely approval. Councillor Laura Mayes emphasised that there was no room for complacency and that the Council was always focusing on continued improvements to the service.

## **Main Considerations for the Council**

14. The number of adoption orders granted increased from 14 in 2012/13 to 40 in 2013/14 and the number of adopters approved increased from 26 in 2012/13 to 40 in 2013/14. At 31 March 2014, there were 26 adopters approved and not yet linked or matched to a child / children.
15. A number of significant incentives and changes have been implemented within the service in response to the continuing focus on adoption reform, for example:
  - The new Prospective Adopter Report (PAR) has been welcomed by staff and adoption panel alike.
  - Funds from the Adoption Reform Grant have been utilised to enable adoption records to be electronically maintained and retained. The new two stage process aimed at speeding up the assessment (and training) of adoptive parents has been introduced and procedures and processes have been adapted to reflect new expectations and timescales.
  - An effective recruitment campaign funded from the Adoption Reform Grant has resulted in an increasing number of enquiries. LGM International Ltd was appointed in July 2013 to provide an adoption campaign for Wiltshire Council until 31 March 2014. The overall campaign delivered nearly 4 million viewing opportunities through a combination of outdoor advertising, digital display ads and a promoted post on Facebook. During the first 2 bursts of the marketing campaign, the number of enquiries rose to 21 (October 2013) and 22 (November 2013). Before the campaign, the number of enquiries per month ranged from between 7 to 13.
  - Wiltshire is part of the Adoption West grouping of 8 local authorities working together to scope the development of a new organisation to deliver some / all adoption activities. The Institute of Public Care (IPC) at Oxford Brookes University has been procured to explore the national agenda for change in relation to adoption services, and how to make this agenda work best for children and young people requiring adoption in this sub-region.

A range of work and activities has been undertaken by the consortium between August 2013 and February 2014:

- Analysis of key data submitted by each Local Authority
- Analysis by each Local Authority as to what they see as being their key adoption service challenges
- Bringing together of stakeholders in each Local Authority to consider current and future challenges for their adoption service and to ascertain the 'appetite for change' in working more collaboratively across the sub-region

- A literature review paper bringing together current thinking on adoption services in understanding the drivers for change politically and professionally and what the experience is nationally of working collaboratively in adoption partnerships and consortiums
  - Project leadership from a Steering Group which represents the 8 Adoption West local authorities chaired by a Director (Gloucestershire) to guide and oversee the work of the project
  - Soft market testing workshop with Voluntary Adoption Agencies to share current thinking and ascertain their views on market development issues
16. There has been a tangible increase in inter-agency placements with an increasing number of children from other local authorities being placed with Wiltshire approved adoptive parents. The number of Special Guardianship Orders granted is also increasing. Where other agencies place a child with Wiltshire Council approved adoptive parents, Wiltshire Council receive the agreed inter-authority fee of £27,000 for one child placed. This increased to £40,500 where 2 siblings are placed at the same time and to £54,000 where 3 siblings or more are placed at the same time.
17. The staffing structure has benefitted from a change in Head of Service and a refocusing of responsibilities linked to skills and experience. There is a transparency in the service which is allowing for a period of sustained improvement in practice.
18. There is a national change agenda driven by central government that impacts on each local authority. The adoption team is meeting the requirements with an degree of success

#### Management of the service

19. The table below details the management and staffing for Wiltshire Council's Adoption Service. All the Managers, adoption support workers and adoption support social workers hold the minimum social work qualification and have had a minimum of 2 years experience in children and families social work or a closely related field.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Designation</b>
Carolyn Godfrey	Corporate Director
Terence Herbert	Associate Director
Pier Pritchard	Acting Head of Service
Owen Evans	Adoption Team Manager
Alison Lewis	Assistant Team Manager Adoption – Adoption Support (part time)
Debbie Harper	Assistant Team Manager Adoption – Recruitment and Assessment (part time)
Sarah Dainty	Concurrency Officer
Adoption Recruitment and Assessment	

Name	Designation
Charlotte Gilbertson Leonie McKenna Pauline Fairman Jane Priborsky Danielle DeSilva Vacant post	Qualified social worker Qualified social worker Qualified social worker (part time) Qualified social worker (part time) Adoption Support Worker Qualified social worker (part time)
Adoption Support  2 x vacant posts (recruitment process underway, adverts closed 03/06/2014) Denise O'Connor Ann Mazzotta Catherine Bull	Qualified social worker  Qualified social worker (part time) Adoption Support Worker Adoption Support Worker

### Services provided

20. The Wiltshire Council Adoption Service provides a quality and timely child-centred service for children and young people who need adoption because they cannot be brought up by their own parents.
21. The Wiltshire Council Adoption Service is delivered through 2 teams: the Adoption Referral and Assessment Team and the Adoption Support Team.
22. The Adoption Referral and Assessment Team provide permanency for children and young people through recruiting and assessing adoptive families.
23. The Adoption Support Team supports adoptive families and their children to ensure placements succeed. The services in place include therapeutic support, counselling, advice and information, training workshops / support groups, family days and events, an annual conference, a newsletter, financial support and links with educational psychologists and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) provided by Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust.
24. Through a contract with PACT (Parents and Children Together), a voluntary adoption agency, the Adoption Service provides:
  - a. An intermediary service for birth relatives and adopted adults who wish to trace each other
  - b. A full range of services to step-parents who wish to adopt
  - c. Services to inter-country adopters

### Adoption Service Improvement Plan

25. On 6 March 2014, the Department for Education (DfE) lifted the Improvement Issue which addressed the issues in the April 2012 Ofsted report on the inspection of safeguarding and looked after children in Wiltshire.

26. The final meeting of the Safeguarding Improvement Board took place in April 2014 and there are now 3 groups overseeing work to ensure that we continue to improve outcomes for children and young people. These are the Safeguarding and Child Protection Improvement Group, the Looked After Children (LAC) Improvement Group and the Early Help Improvement Group. Oversight of the overall safeguarding picture is monitored and challenged by the Wiltshire Safeguarding Children Board.
27. An Adoption Improvement Plan was first developed in May 2012 following feedback from the adoption diagnostic assessment pilot. This formed the basis for the Permanency and Adoption Improvement Plan which was first approved by the Safeguarding Improvement Board in May 2013. In March 2014, the LAC Improvement Group approved the conclusion of the Permanency and Adoption Improvement Plan and agreed that the development of 1 overarching LAC Improvement Plan should include a focus on:
- Improving timescales for children and young people needing to be adopted – this includes the role of the adoption panel, resourcing assessments, use of Family Group Conferencing and meeting the timescales of the revised Public Law Outline as part of the implementation of the Family Justice Review.
  - Improving our adoption support offer.
  - Developing a commissioning plan for possible sub-regional partnership for the Adoption West Directors of Children’s Services.

Performance information 1 October 2013 – 31 March 2014

28. This section of the report gives the performance information covering the period 1 October 2013 – 31 March 2014, as required for Wiltshire Council Cabinet.

***Number, type and age of children waiting for an adoptive placement***

<b>Legal status at that time</b>	<b>2011/12</b>	<b>2012/13</b>	<b>2013/14</b>
Section 20	4	9	20
Interim Care Order	22	26	19
Care Order	1	2	1
None		1	
<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>40</b>

<b>Ethnic origin</b>	<b>2011/12</b>	<b>2012/13</b>	<b>2013/14</b>
White British	24	27	35
Mixed / Other	3	11	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>40</b>

<b>Age</b>	<b>2011/12</b>	<b>2012/13</b>	<b>2013/14</b>
0-11 months	5	13	6
12-23 months	4	7	13

<b>Age</b>	<b>2011/12</b>	<b>2012/13</b>	<b>2013/14</b>
2-4 years	15	13	12
5-10 years	3	5	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>40</b>

<b>Children Adopted</b>	<b>2011/12</b>	<b>2012/13</b>	<b>2013/14</b>
<b>Age</b>			
0-11 months	1	0	1
12-23 months	2	5	5
2-4 years	12	7	20
5-10 years	2	2	13
11 and over	0	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>40</b>

<b>Children Matched out of County</b>	<b>2011/12</b>	<b>2012/13</b>	<b>2013/14</b>
	<i>1 child in 1 placement</i>	<i>4 children in 3 placements</i>	<i>5 children in 4 placements</i>

<b>Out of County Children Matched with Wiltshire Adopters</b>	<b>2011/12</b>	<b>2012/13</b>	<b>2013/14</b>
	<i>4 children in 4 placements</i>	<i>1 child in 1 placement</i>	<i>16 children in 11 placements</i>

### ***Agency's performance against timescales***

29. The latest scorecard was published in January 2014 and is attached as appendix 2.
30. The scorecard reports on activity for the period 2010 to 2013 and was included in the previous adoption agency report to Cabinet in November 2013.
31. The scorecard reports that the average time between Wiltshire receiving a court order to place a child and deciding to match a child to an adoptive family was 169 days compared to the national average of 210 days.
32. Similarly, the average time from a child entering care and moving in with an adoptive family was 673 days compared to the national average of 647. This figure is still above the national average, but is an improvement on last year's figure of 750 days.
33. The table below details performance against the scorecard timescales month-by-month:



Average time between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family, for children who have been adopted (days) A1														
Wiltshire 2013/14													English average 2011/12	Statistical neigh Average 2011/12 (denotes good +)
2012/13	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar		
630	687	1035	577	1007	382	612	388	319	0	597	701	508	3YA 636 2009-12	3YA 533 2009-12

Average time between a local authority receiving a court order to place a child and the local authority deciding to match an adoptive family A2														
Wiltshire 2013/14													English average 2011/12	Statistical neigh Average 2011/12 (denotes good +)
2012/13	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar		
122	N/A	133	193	38	125	426 <sup>#</sup>	104	57	0	239	220	170	3YA 195 2009-12	3YA 128 2009-12

% children who wait less than 21 months between entering care and moving in with their adoptive family A3														
Wiltshire 2013/14													English average 2011/12	Statistical neigh Average 2011/12 (denotes good +)
2012/13	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar		
61%	N/A	75%	50%	50%	100%	50%	100%	100%	0	67%	0%	100%	3YA 56% 2009-12	3YA 63% 2009-12

### ***Applications and assessments of prospective adoptive families***

	2012/13	2013/14
Number of enquiries to be an adopter		137
Number of applications to be an adopter		67
Number of newly approved adopters and time taken to approve adopters from application (scorecard indicator B2)	26	40
0-3 months	2	4
4-6 months	6	17
7-12 months	14	18
More than 12 months	4	1
Number of approved adopters unmatched		24
Number of approved adopters matched to a child		26

34. The latest publication of the Adoption Scorecard shows a 10.3% improvement in the average time between a child entering care and moving in with their adoptive family. The average time between the local authority receiving court authority to place a child and the local authority deciding on a match with an adoptive family is 7.1%, below the national threshold average. These figures are not synonymous with the improvements made to the timeliness of assessing adopters and placing children; the reasons for this are as follows:
- The length of time taken to complete care proceedings within the Family Justice System continues to impact on the timeliness of children being placed for adoption. The Family Justice Review and the Children and Families Bill have introduced measures to avoid unnecessary delay in care proceedings which mean that care and supervision proceedings must be completed within six months, timetabling and case management decisions must be child focused and expert testimony should be commissioned only where necessary to resolve the case.
  - The scorecard is based on a rolling three year average of indicators and a cohort of historical cases continues to adversely affected performance indicators.
  - 3 foster carer families have adopted 3 children in their care in 2013/14. This has had no adverse effect on the timescales for these children.
  - 7 children were placed inter-agency in other local authorities in 2013/14 - it took longer to identify placements for these children.

#### Financial state of the adoption agency

35. The tables below set out the budget and actual expenditure for the 2013/14 financial year and the budget and projected expenditure for the 2014/15 financial year.

<b>2013/14 Financial Year</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Actual Expenditure</b>
Salaries & team running costs	600,230	737,716
Carer recruitment & training	17,000	7,332
Adoption Allowances (all types)	869,900	1,159,041
Adoption Income	0	-365,016
	<b>1,487,130</b>	<b>1,539,073</b>

<b>2014/15 Financial Year</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Projected Expenditure</b>
Salaries & team running costs	534,900	534,900
Carer recruitment & training	17,000	10,000
Adoption Allowances (all types)	869,900	1,000,000
Adoption Income	-60,000	-183,100
	<b>1,361,800</b>	<b>1,361,800</b>

36. This financial information details the activity for the adoption service for the period to 31 March 2014. The income in both years relates to an element of grant income where adoption team staff have worked on grant activity and relate to inter agency fees which are the fees charged when adopters approved by one agency are matched with a child in the care of another, the forecast is higher than budget based on children's plans.
37. In 2013/14 there was a planned overspend as the planned number of children being adopted and supported with allowances increased. We would anticipate this would repeat in 2014/15 and as children move from fostering to adoption, we would adjust the budget accordingly. The capacity of the service and the financial implications of any increase in activity are taken into account within the budget setting process and monitored throughout the year.
38. There has been a significant increase in requests for financial support to adopters and special guardians. As at 31 March 2014, there were the following families being supported with ongoing financial allowances:

	At 31 March 2013		At 31 March 2014	
	Children	Carers	Children	Carers
SGO Allowance	47	34	92	78
RO Allowance	15	11	20	7
Adoption Allowance	52	39	63	44
<b>Total</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>129</b>

39. In addition to the budget above, the Adoption Reform Grant (ring fenced) totalling £188,960 was fully utilised during the financial year to 31 March 2014 and the un-ring fenced grant totalling £881,740 was partially spent, with the remainder (£629,818) being rolled over into a corporate reserve that Children's Services Leadership Team will administer to a number of priorities including children's social care during 2014/15.
40. A further £50 million Adoption Reform Grant has been allocated to local authorities in 2014-15 by the Department for Education to continue to support the work to improve adoption services. The grant is not ring-fenced and has been allocated using a similar formula to the non ring-fenced element of last year's grant. Local authorities are able to use the funding at their discretion in order to meet local need. Wiltshire's allocation for 2014-15 is £438,999. Proposed plans for both years' grants are being considered by senior management this month.

#### Panel activity

	2012/13	2013/14
Number of panels held	25	24
Number of Prospective Adoptive Families considered	28	41
Number of Matches considered	25	26

#### **Safeguarding Implications**

41. The Wiltshire Council Adoption Service is part of Wiltshire Council's children's social care services. All Wiltshire Council children's services are delivered according to the Wiltshire Children's Services Procedures Manual and are overseen by the Wiltshire Safeguarding Children Board. The local authority has effective child and vulnerable adult safeguarding procedures.
42. This report is for note by Wiltshire Council Cabinet.

### **Public Health Implications**

43. Not applicable – for note by Wiltshire Council Cabinet.

### **Environmental and Climate Change Considerations**

44. Not applicable – for note by Wiltshire Council Cabinet.

### **Equalities Impact of the Proposal**

45. Not applicable – for note by Wiltshire Council Cabinet.

### **Risk Assessment**

46. Risks that may arise if the performance of the adoption agency is not effective and is not achieving good outcomes for children and young people:
1. Safeguarding risk to looked after children and young people if they are placed with adoptive parents who have not been fully assessed, prepared and supported – safeguarding is considered a high level risk in the corporate risk register
  2. Reputational risk to Council if the adoption agency is not effective and does not achieve good outcomes for children and young people who need adoption
  3. Reputational risk to Council if we do not meet statutory timescales for children and young people needing to be adopted
  4. Financial risk to Council if placements that are made are not stable leading to placement breakdown and subsequently children returning to the Local Authority's care
47. Risks that may arise if Cabinet note and accept the contents of this report and actions that will be taken to manage these risks:

	<b>Risk</b>	<b>Action to mitigate the risk</b>
1.	Inadequate supply of adopters to meet demands	An Adoption Service Marketing Strategy will be developed and implemented, building on knowledge gained during the marketing campaign of 2013/14
2.	Ability to meet budget – increased costs of service provision	Use of the Adoption Reform Grant 2014/15
3.	The service cannot meet	Key actions are included in the Looked After

statutory timescales for children and young people needing to be adopted	Children Improvement Plan to improve performance and ensure we meet statutory timescales
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### **Financial Implications**

48. The budget and expenditure for 2013-14, and projected expenditure for 2014-15, are outlined in paragraphs 35 – 40 above. The activity and therefore expenditure has increased in 2013-14 financial year as per the Government's agenda for adoption reform. We would anticipate the same or increased levels for 2014-15. The cost of supporting an adopted child is less than the average costs of care and is often time limited as opposed to care costs which continue until 18 years or longer if the young person has additional needs or is in full time education.

### **Legal Implications**

49. No legal implications arising.

### **Options Considered**

50. Not applicable – for note by Wiltshire Council Cabinet.

### **Conclusions**

51. During the past twelve months the Government's continuing adoption reform agenda has brought about further changes to adoption policies and practice. Central to the reform programme is a belief in the importance of recruiting more adoptive families and reducing the amount of time a child has to wait before being adopted. Wiltshire Council's Adoption Service is committed to improving service delivery and permanent outcomes for adopted children and young people. The Adoption Service is working collaboratively with other social care teams and agencies to ensure a whole service approach to prevent delay in securing permanency for children and young people through adoption.
52. In Wiltshire during the last financial year there has been a significant increase in the number of children and young people adopted and a considerable uplift in the number of adoptive families approved during the same period.

**Terence Herbert, Associate Director  
Child, Youth, 0-25 SEN/Disabilities, Children & Families Social Care**

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Report Author:

Pier Pritchard, Acting Head of Service, Children & Families Social Care  
Email: pier.pritchard@wiltshire.gov.uk  
Phone: 01722 438142

04 June 2014

## **Background Papers**

The following unpublished documents have been relied on in the preparation of this report:

None

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1: March 2013 Ofsted recommendations

Appendix 2: Wiltshire's Adoption Scorecard, September 2013

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## Appendix 1: March 2013 Ofsted recommendations

	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Update as at 12 March 2014</b>
1	Consistent, quality and timely life story book and later life letters - sent within 10 working days of the adoption ceremony (NMS 2.7 and 2.8)	'Life Story' and 'Later Life Letter' training courses have been delivered to staff with a total of 32 staff attending. The outcome of the audit undertaken by the Adoption Panel suggests that the quality and consistency of completion of both later life letters and life story work remains an issue across the service.
2	Support children to achieve their educational potential through continuing to develop virtual education services to include adopted children (NMS 7.1)	The Virtual School Officer for Adoption in post. Case work to date has included 1 situation to prevent a permanent exclusion. Impact - adoptive parents engaged more positively with school than for some considerable time and there is now agreement with all agencies for the longer term goal.
3	Ensure personnel files are well ordered and can be easily audited to show that files contain evidence of identity checks and all the other requirements of Schedule 3 of the Local Authority Adoption Service (England) Regulations 2003 (Regulation 11 (3) (d), Schedule 3 and NMS 21.3).	Completed.
4	Update the Statement of Purpose for 2013/14 to take account of the new 2 stage Adopter Assessment process and new PAR. Ensure that the SoP contains all the information required by Schedule 1 of the Local Authority Adoption Service (England) Regulations 2003; in particular, the name and address of the service's manager (18.1 and Regulation 2, Schedule 1)).	Wiltshire Adoption Agency Statement of Purpose has been reviewed and updated. It is now fully compliant with NMS 18.1 and Regulation 2, Schedule 1 and is available on the Wiltshire Council website.
5	Ensure that the children's guide to adoption contains a statement as to the matters listed in Schedule 2 of the Local Authority Adoption Service (England) Regulations 2003; in particular, a summary of the complaints procedure and contact details for the office of the Children's Rights Director (Regulation 3 and NMS 18.5).	Revised in order to be compliant with Regulation 3 and NMS 18.5. Contingency has been made from within the Adoption Reform Grant to produce our own children's guides. Plans have been made to work together with the Voice and Influence Team to achieve this. In agreement with Devon, we purchase and use their Guide.
6	Ensure retention of records of recruitment and suitability checks; in particular, that records are kept of telephone verification of references (safeguarding and safer recruitment) (NMS 21.1).	Wiltshire Council have designed a comprehensive record of recruitment and suitability checks. An interactive spreadsheet has been developed to hold all the required information. The spreadsheet is securely stored in a shared folder with restricted access, for the service managers to complete and for few named managers to review. A system to audit the future completion of the spreadsheets is in place.

## Appendix 2: Wiltshire's Adoption Scorecard, September 2013

