

Report to: **Scrutiny Committee for Social Services and Health**  
Date: **6 September 2001**  
By: **Director of Social Services**  
Title of Report: **Interim Report on Implementation of Action Plan  
for Best Value Review of Adoption Services**  
Purpose of Report: **To provide Members with a progress report of work in hand**

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

**1. To note progress made**

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**1. Financial Appraisal**

1.1 It is not anticipated that any additional costs arising from the Action Plan will be incurred in the current financial year. A fuller appraisal is necessary of potential increased costs arising from implementation of the new Adoption Standards, issued in August 2001; these will be presented to this Committee in March 2002.

**2. Supporting Information**

2.1 At their meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> February 2001 the County Council accepted the recommendations of the report of the Scrutiny Committee for Social Inclusion concerning the Best Value Review of Adoption Services.

2.2 The attached action plan sets out the tasks in hand and comments on progress achieved and expected. Members will be aware that the Department underwent a major management re-organisation in May; therefore, there has been a little delay in some elements of this plan.

2.3 An outline of this plan was presented to the Adoption Panel in June as part of the formal feedback following the review.

2.4 It is intended that a final report of the action plan will be presented to this Committee at its meeting in March 2002.

**CHIEF OFFICER:**

David Archibald, Director of Social Services

Tel. No. 01273- 481238

**Contact Officer:**

Helen Davies, Assistant Director (C & F)

Tel. No. 01273 - 481274

**BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

Scrutiny Committee for Social Inclusion Best Value Review of Adoption Services 12 January 2001  
– final report by Project Board.

Social Services Committee 30 January 2001 – Social Services Department Response to the Best Value Review of Adoption Services.

**BEST VALUE REVIEW of ADOPTION SERVICES  
ACTION PLAN**

<b>Recommendation No</b>	<b>WHAT ACTION</b>	<b>BY WHO</b>	<b>WHO ELSE INVOLVED</b>	<b>TARGET COMPLETION DATE</b>	<b>PROGRESS/COMMENTS</b>
1.	Research formal permanency panel systems used elsewhere. Draft options for consideration by C&F DMT	V Milford	Lyn Fletcher Carole Sykes Locality Services Representative LAC Chair	January 2002	Information gathering commenced. Draft paper to be presented to Divisional Managers late October 2001.
2.	Incorporate needs of Fostering & Adoption Teams into Recruitment & Retention Work Programme	N Weatherall	Members of Recruitment & Retention Group	October 2001	Draft paper following two successful staff workshops, presented to R&R Group in August. Recommendations to be presented to Divisional Managers in October 2001.
3.	Devise outline training plan to support full implementation of National Standards	V Milford	B Skinner L Fletcher	October 2001	Profile of adoption in existing training plan has been raised but no specific progress on strategy. This to be undertaken as priority over next 3 months. (National Standards were not launched until 7 August 2001.)
4.	Use text of Draft National Standards to update Department Policy & Procedure and strengthen link to Adult Mental Health and Substance Misuse Services.	V Milford	Officer Members of Adoption Panel. Consult with Vol. Sector via P.A.C.Contract Steering Group	February 2002	Since this recommendation was adopted the Government has moved swiftly in drafting Adoption Bill. Important to ensure that any new SSD Policy & Procedure is consistent with new statutory responsibilities and with new National Standards.

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5.	Review the current and predicted workload. Develop Team Plan to address priorities for the year. 3 new posts created through Q.P. funding to be integrated into team.	Carole Sykes	Lyn Fletcher Fiona Cialfi	September 2001	Work in hand as part of revised Department Business and Team Planning arrangements
6.	Analyse current available placements against children in system. Identify shortfall and profile the children. Consult with consortium on likelihood of placement. Identify costs to SSD of failure to place and report to DMT on proposed action to recruit carers.	Fiona Cialfi	Carole Sykes Lyn Fletcher Finance Officer Representative	October 2001	Work in hand as part of above Business Plan and Adoption Panel Business Plan. Report to Divisional Managers due end of October 2001.
7.	Following on from action in "5" above, specify separately the Post Adoption Support role that needs to be provided and analyse the potential benefits of some activity being undertaken by others.	Vicki Milford	Fiona Cialfi Lyn Fletcher Consultation with Voluntary Sector members of P.A.C. Contract Steering Group	March 2002	Work to commence when action on 5 & 6 above completed.
8.	Incorporate standards into policy, procedure and practice.	Fiona Cialfi	Carole Sykes Lyn Fletcher	January 2002	Work in hand in Adoption Team to ensure Business Plan is in line with Standards. Need to review requirements of Adoption Bill when published to identify further work.