

Cabinet

10 September 2024

Aspire Adoption Statement of Purpose 1st of April 2024 to 31st March 2025 and Annual Report 1st April 2023 to 31st of March 2024

For Decision

Portfolio Holder:

Cllr. C Sutton, Children's Services, Education & Skills

Local Councillor(s):

Cllr

Executive Director:

T Leavy, Executive Director of People - Children

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Report Status: Public (the exemption paragraph is N/A)

Brief Summary: Dorset Council has a duty under the Adoption and Children Act 2002 to establish and maintain an adoption service for its area.

Dorset Council along with BCP Council discharges this duty through a delegation of functions to Aspire Adoption, a Regional Adoption Agency. Dorset retains overall responsibility for its adoption and special guardianship services, continuing to have parental responsibility for its own Children in Care but most adoption and some special guardianship functions are delegated to Aspire Adoption.

As part of Dorset's strategic development of specialist Kinship Care services, there is ongoing work to transition the Special Guardianship work from Aspire to the Kinship Care Service within Dorset..

The appended report is the seventh annual adoption report presented by Aspire Adoption, summarising the work of the agency in the period 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024. It has been written to ensure it provides the Council with an opportunity to satisfy

itself that the requirements of the Statutory Adoption Guidance 2013 and the Adoption Minimum Standards 2014 are met.

This report provides a summary of the comprehensive self-evaluation of Aspire Regional Adoption Agency

Recommendation: Cabinet Approve Aspire Adoption Annual Report and Statement of Purpose

Reason for Recommendation: Cabinet is satisfied that the Aspire Statement of Purpose accurately describes the activities that the agency discharges on behalf of Dorset Council and the Annual Report satisfies the report that these activities were discharged to a high standard in the last year.

1. **Report**

1.1 Please see the reports attached

2. **Financial Implications**

Aspire Adoption Agency delivered services for the financial year 2023 to 2024 over the agreed budget. Aspire Executive Board will have access to the full financial report

3. **Natural Environment, Climate & Ecology Implications**

None

4. **Well-being and Health Implications**

None

5. **Other Implications**

None

6. **Risk Assessment**

6.1 **HAVING CONSIDERED:** the risks associated with this decision; the level of risk has been identified as: **LOW**

Current Risk: **LOW**

Residual Risk: **LOW**

7. **Equalities Impact Assessment**

The service promotes permanence for children through Special Guardianship and Adoption and services to support adopters and Special Guardians. It commissions an independent birth parent service.

The statement of purpose outlines the services commitment to dignity, equality and respect for all who come into contact with the service.

8. **Appendices**

Appendix 1: Aspire Adoption Annual Report 2024 to 2025

Appendix 2: Aspire Adoption Statement of Purpose 2023 to 2024

9. **Background Papers**

None

10. **Report Sign Off**

10.1 This report has been through the internal report clearance process and has been signed off by the Director for Legal and Democratic (Monitoring Officer), the Executive Director for Corporate Development (Section 151 Officer) and the appropriate Portfolio Holder(s)