

Children and Young People Committee

CYP(4)-15-12 Paper 1a

St David's Children Society – supplementary evidence on the establishment of a National Adoption Service

Consultation Questions

88): Do you agree the functions that a National Adoption Service will be responsible for, as set out in paragraph bb?

St. David's fully supports the proposals for a 'national adoption body' as set out in the consultation document.

89): Do you suggest any additional functions that should be included?

We believe that a 'Welsh Placement Strategy' with a robust determination to place Welsh children in Wales should be a core principle of the 'national adoption body.' We recognise that there might be occasions where this may not be achievable; however, a driving commitment to place Welsh children in Wales should be a crucial consideration in the mission of a 'national adoption body.'

St. David's would support the concept of an 'Adoption Register' for Wales. The 'Adoption Register for England and Wales' has a referral and matching mechanism for all children / prospective adopters waiting for placements. The effectiveness of such a register would be greatly enhanced if it had the capacity to collate information from the Independent Reviewing Officers. This data would provide an early warning system on the numbers and particular needs of children who were likely to require future adoption placements. An early flagging system would help direct the adoptive parent recruitment strategy of the 'national adoption body.'

90): Are there any other barriers to the current arrangements that should be considered in the development of the Social Services (Wales) Bill?

Within some agencies, poor understanding of the full costs of providing adoption services is a barrier to supporting change. Exploration of the financial arrangements underpinning adoption services, savings to fostering and other budgets while evidencing improved outcomes for children will help remove this resistance.

91): Do you have any other comments that you wish to make about our proposals for a National Adoption Service?

Research clearly evidences that the most successful outcomes achieved for children are in those agencies where there are seamless, high quality services, where each element of the service shapes and informs the next stage or need.

The development of a national adoption service enshrines in a practical and achievable manner the Welsh nation's commitment to all of its children irrespective of where they live in Wales. It will be an exemplar of effective collaboration producing the best outcome for our most disadvantaged children.