



Corporate Parenting Committee

13th October 2021

**Report from the Strategic Director of
Children and Young People**

Brent Adoption Report

6-monthly report: 1st April 2021 to 30th September 2021

Wards Affected:	All
Key or Non-Key Decision:	N/A
Open or Part/Fully Exempt: (If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)	Open
No. of Appendices:	N/A
Background Papers:	N/A
Contact Officer(s): (Name, Title, Contact Details)	<p>Debbie Gabriel, Head of Service, Adopt London West Brent's Regional Adoption Agency gabrield@ealing.gov.uk</p> <p>Onder Beter, Head of Service for Looked After Children and Permanency onder.beter@brent.gov.uk</p> <p>Nigel Chapman Operational Director, Integration and Improved Outcomes Nigel.chapman@brent.gov.uk</p>

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1.0 Summary

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide a briefing to the Council's Corporate Parenting Committee in relation to:

- adoption performance data for the period 1st April 2021 – 30th September 2021.
- the progress and activity of Adopt London West;
- how good outcomes are being achieved for children.

Information and child level data presented in Section 5 and 6 of this report were provided by Brent; the rest of this report includes the progress and activity of Adopt London West.

1.2 This is the third report presented to the Corporate Parenting Committee in this format as Cabinet gave approval in April 2019 for Brent council to:

- a) join the Regional Adoption Agency (RAA) *Adopt London West* consisting of the London boroughs of Ealing, Hounslow and Hammersmith and Fulham for the provision of Adoption services and Special Guardianship Support; and
- b) delegate authority to the Strategic Director, Children and Young People, in consultation with the Lead Member for Children's Safeguarding, Early Help and Social Care to agree and enter into a Partnership Agreement with participating boroughs.

1.3 The Key Decision was made on 2nd September 2019 and, following the TUPE of those Brent staff members who chose to move to Ealing, Adopt London West has been a 'live' RAA since October 2019.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Corporate Parenting Committee is requested to review, comment on, and question the contents of this report. This is to provide evidence that the management of the adoption service is being monitored and challenged in order to promote good outcomes for children. This is in line with standard 25.6 of the Adoption National Minimum Standards (2014).

3.0 Background – Adopt London West

- 3.1** Adopt London West (ALW) Regional Adoption Agency became operational on 1st September 2019 with a formal launch in October 2019.
- 3.2** A comprehensive partnership agreement forms the basis of the ongoing partnership arrangements. The partnership board on which the Strategic Director, Brent CYP, sits will continue to provide the necessary oversight to ensure that the shared service is appropriately scrutinised and supported to deliver improved outcomes for children and adopters.
- 3.3** As part of the national RAA implementation and development programme a network of RAA leaders has been established and monthly meetings are facilitated by the DfE delivery partner Deloitte. Meetings are attended by senior DfE officials and provide an opportunity to learn from the early RAAs and also to consider wider sector collaboration and influence.
- 3.4** It is acknowledged from evidence gained from the first cohort of national RAAs to become operational, that the first 2 years after going live for an RAA is a period of transition and transformation to a new delivery model. Performance has been noted to dip in the early stages of operation, therefore the Partnership Board and Heads of Service meetings are closely monitoring practice and performance as a new and developing service.

4.0 Responsibilities

- 4.1** As delegated in the partnership agreement between Brent, Ealing, Hammersmith and Fulham and Hounslow, Ealing (as the host Local Authority for ALW) is responsible for ensuring that children whose permanence plan is adoption in all four partner Local Authorities are matched in a timely way with adopters who best meet the needs of those children. This involves featuring children in various profiling events, via national linking websites, supporting them in adoption activity days and networking events with other Regional Adoption Agencies in London and nationally. ALW is also responsible for the preparation and assessment of prospective adopters, supporting adopters with family finding following approval and the on-going post placement support to adopters and special guardians. ALW is also responsible for the provision of services to adopted adults and all those affected by adoption who request a specific service or an assessment of need.
- 4.2** ALW also provides a service to Brent residents who wish to make a private application to adopt their partner's child, referred to as step-parent adoption, or special guardians who may wish to adopt the child in their care. The team

is also involved in completing adoption reports on children who may have travelled from and been adopted abroad; there is a legal requirement for these adoptions to be made lawful in the UK.

4.3 Inter-country adoption referrals continue to be referred to the Inter-Country Adoption Centre, a specialist Voluntary Adoption Agency (VAA), with whom a service level agreement is in place.

4.4 Statutory social work in relation to children needing adoptive placements remains the responsibility of Brent CYP. The care plans for children are formulated by the social work teams and agreed by Head of Service for LAC and Permanency. The Operational Director, Integration and Improved Outcomes then considers and ratifies any adoption plans.

5.0 Performance Data

5.1 The most recent set of national adoption scorecards was published in July 2021, covering the 3-year period April 2017 to March 2020.

Adoption Scorecards (published [here](#))

- **A1** (The average time taken for a child entering care to being placed for adoption): 457 days. This is a 2% increase on the previous reporting period (450 days) and compares unfavourably against the 2017-20 national average of 367 days and the statistical neighbour average of 350. This is due to delay in completion of care proceedings for a small number of children. As the number of children with an adoption plan is low, delays to care proceedings adversely affects this performance indicator.
- **A2** (The average time taken from the Local Authority receiving court authority to place a child for adoption and a match being approved): 138 days. This is an 18% decrease on the previous reporting period (169 days) which is lower than the 2017-20 national average of 175 days and compares favourably to the statistical neighbour average of 205. This demonstrates effective action taken to ensure children are placed in their adoptive homes without delay as soon as court authority to do so is provided.

6.0 Child related data

6.1 There have been no Adoption Orders granted yet during this reporting year.

6.2 There are currently 4 adoption applications in progress; applications are likely to be made for the remaining children placed for adoption within the next quarter.

- 6.3** There are currently 11 children with an adoption plan who have not yet been adopted.

The details of these children's cases are as follows:

- Six children are placed for adoption.
- One child has been matched with their new family and will be placed by the end of October 2021.
- Four children remain subject to ongoing care proceedings, which are expected to conclude towards the end of 2021.

6.4 Early Permanence for Children

For some children it is appropriate to consider placing them with foster carers who are also approved adopters, this is referred to as an Early Permanence placement. This enables the child to be placed earlier than is usually possible and before Court proceedings have concluded. Brent have recently placed a child in an early permanence placement, ensuring that the child is able to benefit from the security and stability of their adoptive family and development of early attachments as early as possible.

ALW and our Adopt London partners are working to increase the numbers of Early Permanence placements made across London ensuring specialist training and support is offered to those adopters who are willing to consider early placements.

7.0 Adopter Recruitment

- 7.1** ALW approved 7 Adopter households in the period 1st April 2021 – 30th Sept 2021, a total of 20 households in the full reporting year 2020/21. This year's approval numbers have reduced when compared to last year's performance; this reflects assessment capacity pressures. The Partnership Board have agreed additional temporary posts to respond to these pressures; a Practice Manager has recently taken up one of the posts to provide additional management oversight to recruitment activity. Performance is expected to improve as a result of these measures.

29% of adopters approved during this reporting period are from BAME communities and 29% identify as LGBTQ.

- 7.2** There are currently 36 ALW approved adopters, 15 of whom already have a child placed with them, 14 are still in the active family finding stage, and 1 family are linked to child/ren. 6 families are on hold due to their personal circumstances.
- 7.3** During this reporting period, (Apr – Sept 21) the service received 273 general enquiries about adoption compared to 299 in the same period last year.

- 7.4** The adoption assessment process comprises 2 stages. Stage 1 assessments should take place within 2 months - this stage is described as “adopter led”, where adopters work through exercises and complete various tasks that contribute to a full and thorough assessment of their suitability.
- 7.5** Stage 2 should take a maximum of 4 months and is a detailed assessment that is both reflective and analytical. In total, the comprehensive assessment process should be completed within 6 months. Of the families approved so far this year, the majority have been slightly outside of these timescales due to the personal circumstances of the families.
- 7.6** There are currently 20 families in the formal stages of assessment, 9 in Stage 1 and 11 in Stage 2. A further 6 families are expected to be approved in Q3, once the benefits of the additional staffing capacity are realised, Q4 should see an increase in approvals.

8.0 Adoption and Special Guardianship Support

- 8.1** Throughout the assessment and post approval process of searching for the right child to join their family, prospective adopters are informed about support services available to them and are encouraged and supported to attend the *Foundations for Attachment* training course, a course that offers adopters insight and strategies to meet the needs of children who are likely to have experienced developmental trauma.
- 8.2** An internal mentoring scheme is in place to offer support to any new adopters, or those who may need some additional empathic support. ALW have a contract with **Adopter Hub**, an online support forum and adopter community run by voluntary adoption agency PACT that provides training and resources to adopters. In addition, a peer support organisation **We are Family** organise frequent training events and social groups. ALW have a contract for services delivered by **PAC-UK** that offer sensitive and independent therapeutic support.
- 8.3** ALW has an ‘education support group’, which meets six times a year. The group is co-facilitated by an Educational Psychologist and an ALW Social worker and provides a forum for families to receive support and guidance on how to engage with their child’s school and a range of education related issues. The subject of the recent education support groups has been, 25th May 2021, “Supporting Transitions” and 13th July, “Choosing a School”. Each group was attended by 4 families from Brent.
- 8.3.1** An online training event took place on 28th May 2021 as part of the Adopt London Trauma Informed Schools working group, the event

was attended by almost 200 people from across the Adopt London boroughs and Virtual School Heads network.

8.4 In addition, adopters receive regular newsletters that outline relevant research, learning materials, advice, and tools to support parenting strategies as well as training opportunities, seminars, and specialist support groups. There are also adoption related evening seminars that take place at least 4 times a year.

8.5 As part of Adopt London's partnership with We are Family (WAF) an Adopter led peer support organisation; a series of evening webinars have been delivered:

- **20/4/21:** OLLIE foundation, Youth Suicide.
- **29/4/21:** Parenting children who have experienced Trauma – Lauren Topper, Clinical Psychologist.
- **13/5/21:** Foetal Alcohol Syndrome Awareness – FASD Charity.
- **20/5/21:** Managing Contact – Julie Young, senior researcher, University of East Anglia.
- **10/6/21:** Contact from the perspective of a birth mother – Birth parent.
- **24/6/21:** Mindfulness session – mindfulness practitioner.
- **8/7/21:** Music therapy – Chrystal Luk.
- **20/7/21:** The teenage brain – Adele Bates.
- **9/9/21:** Choosing a secondary school – Dr Gabrielle Pelter (Educational Psychologist) & Jane Pickerden ALW.

All webinars are recorded and form an online library of resources available to WAF members.

8.6 Special Guardianship Support

ALW remains the only Adopt London region that has Special Guardianship support as part of the core offer. London's Adoption and Special Guardianship Leadership Board (ASGLB) is committed to improving support services to Special Guardians across London as a key priority for 21/22.

The Special Guardianship Support group in ALW is now co-facilitated with a Brent Special Guardian, who has already taken proactive steps to reach out to the community of Special Guardians in Brent and across the West London partnership to increase engagement and membership of the group. In addition, this person has been invited to join a national working group convened by the Chair of the national ASGLB who is also determined to improve the quality of service offered to Special Guardians across the country.

The National organisation “Kinship” (formerly Grandparents Plus), provides advocacy, peer support and expert advice and information to Special Guardians. ALW were able to commission services from Grandparents Plus funded by the Emergency ASF Covid fund.

It is widely recognised that many children who cease being looked after by the Local Authority to live within their extended family or kinship network benefit from improved outcomes. Therefore, it is essential that the Special Guardians who care for them are offered comprehensive, appropriate support that is often different to that needed by Adopters.

ALW partner LAs have worked together to agree funding to continue to offer specialist support to Special Guardians from “Kinship”. Brent, along with 2 other partner local authorities, have commissioned the enhanced service from Kinship to ensure families most in need benefit from a bespoke service that responds to their individual circumstances.

Financial support for special guardians, including advice and assessment of need, remain the responsibility of the local authority.

9.0 Feedback on quality of service

9.1 Some examples of recent feedback on the quality of the service offered by ALW.

9.2 Information sessions

April:

- *We are really thankful for the wonderful session and the information provided, which is really valuable*

May:

- *The presentation was very informative and helpful in terms to understand the adoption process, possible source of further information (the list of the recommended books). The presenters were very efficient in the way they delivered the information. All topics that a potential adoptive parent needs to know were covered in great details. The approach of the presenters was, warm, friendly, and very informative. The lady, who shared her and her partner's experience as adoptive couple, was very touching and encouraging. Thank you!*
- *The information meeting clarified all the adoption process and hearing the adopter experience was really great and emotional for us.*

- *Very helpful and that's why I choose to adopt through ALW. It was clear and I loved the openness. We are aware that adoption isn't an easy process, but the way you described the journey sounded easier and supportive.*

June:

- *The information meeting was very informative. Lucy (adopter) was extremely eloquent whilst explaining her and her husband's journey through early permanence, together with the highs and lows of this process. She explained very well the emotional roller coaster for her and her husband, this is something that I believe is inevitable as part of this process, and I was grateful for her candour. I was also impressed by how well she explained the honesty and support she thought they had been offered by their social workers, which is a very important aspect of the process, as far as I am concerned. It was inspiring and lovely to see her obvious joy of being a mother.*

July:

- *Thanks a lot for sending this email with the materials and useful resources. We found the information session to be very insightful and productive. It was very well organized, and a lot of our questions were answered. It was really useful to hear it directly from a parent who has gone through the journey.*
- *I would like to pass on my thanks for the session. I found it really informative and having an adopter in the session to talk through her experience was really helpful and brought the experience to life.*

9.3 Adopters who have attended ALW Panel for a match with a child.

- *We felt that each panel member had both our and our future daughter's interests at heart. Panel gave us ample opportunities to contribute, they were interested in our journey and encouraging of our views.*
- *The Panel meeting was well organised, everything was clear in terms of structure, panel were professional and encouraging which made the whole experience excellent, we were treated with respect and kindness as well as professionalism.*
- *It was really clear from everyone giving their recommendations that everyone knew our case so well and spoke about the reasons why they were supporting the match, it really made us feel that time had been spent on this which was amazing.*
- *Despite being well prepared we still felt nervous at the start, the panel chair made us feel comfortable and at ease, all panel members were friendly and respectful, a very good experience, we were treated with respect and genuine interest.*

- *Thank you for making an intimidating meeting feel welcoming, from a group which felt representative of different lived and professional experiences.*

9.4 People using the helpline and Adoption Support services

- *Since ALW has formed, I feel the service has really improved and is very responsive, it feels that emails and information shared has a really nice supportive tone.*
- *I expected to be passed around and that it would be difficult to get help, but actually I was overwhelmed by how welcoming and supportive V was in my initial call.*
- *I am so impressed with the service and incredibly grateful with the speed, professionalism, and kindness with which you helped me today, thank you for going the extra mile for me today.*

10.0 Casework

10.1 Currently ALW is supporting 51 Brent families - 15 are receiving a Social Work service and 36 are currently receiving an ASF therapeutic service.

10.2 There are 80 contact cases open relating to Brent families - 13 direct contact arrangements and 67 active letterbox exchanges.

10.3 There have been 43 requests for access to records in relation to Brent records, out of a total number of 114 requests received by ALW during this period.

11.0 Adoption Support Fund

11.1 Families who require specialist therapeutic support are assessed by a social worker and an application submitted to the Adoption Support Fund (ASF) for funding to cover the costs of the therapeutic services. 26 applications have been made to the ASF on behalf of Brent families in this review period.

11.2 There are currently no families waiting for an application to the ASF; all assessments for support are allocated.

12.0 Adopt London

12.1 ALW is one of 4 Regional Adoption Agencies that make up "Adopt London", a wider collaboration of 23 boroughs that form Adopt London:

- **Adopt London North:** a partnership between Barnet, Camden, Enfield, Hackney, Haringey, and Islington, hosted by Islington.

- **Adopt London South:** a partnership between, Achieving for Children (Richmond and Kingston) Croydon, Lambeth, Lewisham, Merton, Wandsworth, Southwark, and Sutton, hosted by Southwark.
- **Adopt London East:** a partnership between Barking and Dagenham, Havering, Newham, and Tower Hamlets, hosted by Havering; and
- **Adopt London West:** a partnership between Brent, Ealing, Hammersmith and Fulham and Hounslow, hosted by Ealing.

12.2 In order to ensure the best possible services for children and families across London, Adopt London West collaborates closely with the other 3 Adopt London regions. A key priority for Adopt London will continue to be to maximize the opportunities and efficiencies across shared priority areas.

12.3 Key priorities/activities for Adopt London in the next six months include:

12.3.1 Birth Parents Counselling

ALS host LA Southwark are leading on the commissioning of a new counselling service for birth families. The draft service specification has been informed by conversations with PAUSE (Joanne Alper from Adoption Plus and Professor Beth Neil from UEA). The shared ambition is to commission an innovative service that will operate using an assertive outreach model; co-production with birth parents will be integral to the service design.

12.3.2 Development of Readiness tool

An online Adoption readiness tool is in development, this will assist people who are interested in Adoption to decide if it is the right time or appropriate for them to proceed with their interest.

Providing detailed information, guidance, and a range of resources, empowers and enables people interested in Adoption to understand the needs of children requiring adoption and also the qualities and attributes that are needed for them to progress through the assessment process.

Feedback from applicants confirms that most people would prefer to undertake some guided research and reading before they embark on the intensive assessment process. Regional Adoption Agencies have a responsibility to provide information and advice to anyone who is interested in Adoption, the readiness tool will provide an efficient, flexible service that people can access at their own convenience, whilst still having the option to discuss their interest in person.

In addition, an animated film is in development which is due to be launched in October, the film will encourage potential applicants to think more about the characteristics and needs of children who have a plan of Adoption, and to challenge their assumptions about who the right child for them may be.

12.3.3 Further Development of the partnership with WAF (We are Family)

The popular and successful Webinar programme of online training and support to Adopters will continue and a series of new Podcasts will be launched in September/October 2021. The partnership with WAF enables Adopt London to hear directly from Adopters what services are helpful to them, and to explore with them the most useful mediums to offer online/virtual support which has proven to be much more accessible to Adopters than more traditional face to face services.

All webinars produced are available to view on demand, the Trauma & Loss webinar has been viewed by 106 members on demand, following the live event. In the autumn, WAF will extend their membership offer to prospective Adopters who are in the early stages of assessment, the webinar programme and other resources will enable adopters to be better prepared for the likely challenges they may face when a child joins their family. Crucially it will also provide peer support from more experienced adopters.

WAF have used the grant from Adopt London to develop their offer to families and since the start of the partnership have seen membership grow from 500 members in London to 850 members. A shared priority for Adopt London & WAF is to focus on increasing the diversity of membership.

Adopt London have made a small additional grant to WAF to fund an entertainer/activities coordinator for a series of coordinated picnics over a weekend in late September.

A partnership statement is being drafted to support further funding bids that WAF wish to submit, a finance workshop is booked for the autumn to develop a sustainable business and funding model for the ongoing partnership.

12.3.4 Adopt London Partnership Agreement

As the potential for further development of the Adopt London partnership and collaboration activity is understood by the four Heads of Service and Executive Board, a decision has been taken to enter into a formal partnership agreement to provide a robust framework for joint projects.

12.3.5 Marketing & Comms/Website development

Continuous improvement and development of the Adopt London website is an ongoing priority. Plans now include:

- Transfer to a new website provider to enable greater flexibility to the now well-established Marketing & Comms group to manage content and develop new material.
- Increasing the frequency and quality of informative and supportive blogs for all affected by or interested in Adoption.
- Increasing the functionality to support self-guided information, help, resources, and learning.
- Increasing the use of analytics particularly in relation to social media platforms and the ability to target specific demographic groups.
- An Adoption podcast in partnership with Black Ballad, *a lifestyle platform which seeks to tell the human experience through the eyes of Black British Women*, is to be recorded between 21st- 23rd September.
- Improving the area of the website dedicated to support for special guardians.

Please see the link below for Adopt London's website.

<https://adoptlondon.org.uk/>

12.3.6 Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

An Equality, Diversity & Inclusion project is about to commence in partnership with a training & consultancy organisation, the focus is specifically on the experience of black adopters within Adopt London, the aim is to co-produce a programme of work to address the disparity in the system for adopters and for black children who typically wait longer for an adoptive family.

It is envisaged that this will be a medium to long term project and be fully inclusive across the Adopt London partnership.

13.0 Value for Money

13.1 Funding model

Each partner LA transferred the staffing budget for their individual adoption services when Adopt London West launched in 2019, the partnership agreement set out that the funding model should be reviewed, and a new model agreed in 2021. A series of finance modelling workshops have taken place with Directors and Finance lead from each partner LA. A proposed formula will be presented to the Partnership Board on 25th October for agreement, to be effective from April 2022; there will be no increase in costs to Brent.

13.2 ALW's shared contracts and services provide tangible evidence of value for money and economies of scale, the budget commitments for non-staffing costs for 2021/22 is **£231,597**. These include shared contracts for services that Adoption Agencies (RAAs) are required to provide, for example, independent counselling services for birth relatives, a specialist service for people who wish to adopt a child from overseas, training for adopters, costs associated with statutory checks required for prospective adopters.

In addition, there are several other standard services that incur costs that are not statutory requirements, rather accepted custom and practice in any adoption service, these include; marketing and comms, subscriptions for membership organisations, CoramBAAF, New Family Social, Adoption UK. A range of training and development opportunities and other services outlined elsewhere in this report are also included in the non-staffing spend commitments set out above. Under the terms of the current funding formula, Brent's contribution to ALW is 23% of the overall budget. Therefore, the proportionate contribution to the non-staffing budget would be in the region of £53,260, however, due to several efficiencies and other factors, this amount has not been required.

The overall benefits of a shared service are also realised through the practice improvement and opportunities that are possible now that small individual services have become part of the wider Adopt London collaboration and the national RAA network. It was simply not possible for LA Adoption services to offer the range of support and services that can now be delivered as a Regional Adoption Agency.

14.0 National Adoption Strategy

14.1 Government published the first National Adoption Strategy in July 2021, a summary of the key messages and vision is set out below

- £48 million investment ongoing: £46 million Adoption Support Fund, further investment of £1 million for a national recruitment campaign, £500k to improve practice and increase the numbers of Early Permanence placements and £500k for RAA Strategic Leadership) this equates to £1 million new money for Adoption.
- A new framework of National Standards, Recruitment, Matching and Support is to be agreed and implemented.
- Adopters should not be deterred because of their background; the sector need to attract a wider group of Adopters – barriers to be removed
- There is a need to dispel the myth that adoption is only for those who cannot have children.

- An important message is reiterated that we are seeking families for children not children for families.
- Voice of Children and Adopters needs to be heard
- Acknowledgement of Trauma Informed Practice and support for therapeutic parenting training to be offered as part of an early intervention and support model
- Emphasis on Early Permanence – increasing numbers and improving practice, quality mark, pilot for children 5-10, and siblings.
- Outcomes based standards with measurable aims for Adoption Support Services to be devised and implemented with access to early support.
- Transitions to adulthood to be carefully considered and services improved, acknowledgement that young adults who have been adopted are likely to remain vulnerable and their needs may be similar to Care Leavers.

A programme of work to address the priorities set out will be devised by the National RAA leaders' group under the direction of the newly appointed Strategic Lead.

15.0 ALW Adoption Panel

15.1 The role of ALW's panel is as follows:

- to consider the presentation of approvals, reviews, and terminations of adopters' suitability to adopt, following which a recommendation is made by panel members and sent to ALW's Agency Decision Maker (Head of Service) for ratification/challenge.
- to consider whether a relinquished baby from Brent should be placed for adoption, following which a recommendation is made by panel members but sent to Brent's Agency Decision Maker (Operational Director, Integration and Improved Outcomes, Children and Young People's Services) for ratification/challenge; and
- to consider adoption matches between Brent's children and their prospective adopters, following which a recommendation is made by panel members and sent to Brent's Agency Decision Maker (Operational Director, Integration and Improved Outcomes, Children and Young People's Services) for ratification/challenge.

15.2 Feedback between ALW and Brent is considered by the Heads of Service quality assurance group and the Partnership Board and shared with Service Managers in Brent after each panel presentation to aid service development and quality assure the work of the RAA.

15.3 ALW Panel continues to take place virtually via Microsoft Teams.

Prior to each panel meeting, the Adviser liaises with the applicants and external professionals to support them to access Microsoft Teams to reduce the risk of delay on the day and explain how the panel day will run and confirm that they are able to access the meeting confidentially. The Panel Adviser sets up a panel member check-in to join Microsoft Team to ensure that everyone can join securely, without delay and with ease. Panel members and observers also complete and return a confidentiality self-declaration, attesting to this for the duration of the panel meeting.

- 15.4** During the period under review, 8 adoption panels were held in ALW resulting in the successful approval of 7 adoptive families. The Panel recommended adoption as the care plan for 1 Brent child, 2 other Brent children were matched with their new families during this time.
- 15.5** Annual training for panel members is a regulatory requirement. Joint training for panel members and ALW Social workers took place on 21st and 25th May 2021. The topic was Transracial Adoption, the training was delivered by the Inter Country Adoption Centre, a voluntary Adoption Agency and experts in this area. A further panel training practice discussion took place on 6th September 2021, regular practice discussions will continue to further develop practice standards.
- 15.6** As part of continued quality assurance and to ensure the work of the panel is scrutinised, the Strategic Director of Children and Young People and Operational Director (Children and Young People) both observed the work of the ALW adoption panel during this reporting period.