



Title: **Peer Review of Adoption Services – Improvement Plan**

Wards Affected: **All**

To: **Overview and Scrutiny Board** On: **18 July 2012**

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1. Key points and Summary

- 1.1 This report updates the Board of the core outcomes from the peer review of Torbay's Adoption services and outlines the actions being taken to improve adoption.

2. Summary

- 2.1 In May the Department for Education published a set of data on the performance of Adoption agencies (Appendix 1) across the country. Torbay was identified as being within the bottom 20 local authorities nationally.
- 2.2 Identification within the bottom cohort qualified Torbay for a nationally commissioned peer review process which concluded on the 22 May 2012.
- 2.3 In advance of this peer review process, a local task force was put together to develop a thorough self assessment and an improvement plan. A suitably skilled and knowledgeable manager is in place to lead the delivery of this plan.
- 2.4 The main conclusions of the peer review were:
- Torbay has fully realised the urgent task it has in respect of adoption performance, including the causes of delay, but is not about blaming
 - Action planning is developing every day and needs to maintain pace
 - The Leadership Challenge is significant in terms of defining direction and destination
 - Staff need to see clarity, priorities and commitment in order to disengage from the past and focus on the opportunities. Capitalise on their enthusiasm
 - Don't lose the focus on adoption within the wider safeguarding children agenda
 - BUT do avoid fragmentation and continue to strive for integrate pathways that focus on the child's journey and achieving the best possible outcomes for Torbay's children (see appendix 2 for the full report)

2.5 The adoption service is working on a series of actions which are summarised in appendix 3.

Richard Williams
Director of Children's Services

Appendices

Appendix 1	Torbay Adoption Scorecard (published by the Department for Education (May 2012))
Appendix 2	Peer Review of Adoption Services in Torbay
Appendix 3	Outline Action Plan

Documents available in members' rooms

None

Background Papers:

The following documents/files were used to compile this report: