



7 November 2011

Dear Colleague

Committee Inquiry into Adoption

The National Assembly for Wales' Children and Young People Committee is considering carrying out an inquiry into adoption; and is consulting key stakeholders with a strategic interest or expertise in this area to submit written evidence, which will be used to inform the scope of the inquiry.

Why the Committee have chosen to look at adoption?

The Committee is keen to look at what the Welsh Government has done to continue, and develop, its work on adoption in Wales. The Committee believes that action is needed to reduce delays in the adoption process, which they believe would improve outcomes for adopted children by securing permanence for children at an earlier stage. They also believe that the support provided to adoptive parents could be improved.

The Committee acknowledges that this is a complex area because much of the delay in securing permanence for children is the result of important and necessary work with families to ensure the right decisions are made. However, the Committee believe that some of the delay inherent in adoption is avoidable. The Committee also realise that some of the issues relating to adoption, specifically family court proceedings, are non-devolved.

The Committee's Terms of Reference

It is proposed that the Committee should:

- Review delivery of adoption services in Wales, considering whether the current arrangements for adoption are the best they can be and how effectively they reflect the rights of the child.
- Identify specific policy areas where action is needed to remove barriers to adoption, including how best to ensure that delays in the adoption process can be kept to a minimum.
- Consider the support given to adoptive families to help ensure the success and permanence of adoptions.

The Committee will:

- Make recommendations on actions that could be taken to speed up the adoption process; increase the number of children considered for adoption; and improve the support given to adoptive families.
- Consider the evidence for the creation of a single, national adoption agency for Wales as set out in Welsh Government's Programme for Government: <http://wales.gov.uk/about/programmeforgovernment/?lang=en>

What we would like from you - Consultation Questions

The Committee would like to receive your comments on the issues you think should be a priority for the Committee and where you think they can have the greatest impact. Some issues to think about include:

1. What is the main issue of concern in relation to adoption in Wales?
2. If you had to choose one objective for the Committee to focus on, what would it be? How would this benefit adopted children and adoptive parents?
3. Do you agree with the priorities identified by the Committee and are these the most important issues for the Committee to focus on? Is there anything you think is missing that should be included in the inquiry?

The Committee is keen to look at what the Welsh Government has done to continue, and develop, its work in reducing delays in adoption. It has a particular interest in the outcomes of the UK Government's Family Justice Review and the implications of this for Wales: <http://www.justice.gov.uk/about/moj/independent-reviews/family-justice-review/>

Invitation to contribute to the Scoping Inquiry

Interested parties are invited to submit written evidence to the Clerk of the Committee at the above address, to arrive no later than **Friday 18 November 2010**. If possible, please supply an electronic version by e-mail to the following address: CYPCommittee@wales.gov.uk. Please begin your submission by providing some information about your organisation before setting out your views and experiences in relation to some or all of the above questions.

Yours sincerely



Christine Chapman AM
Committee Chair