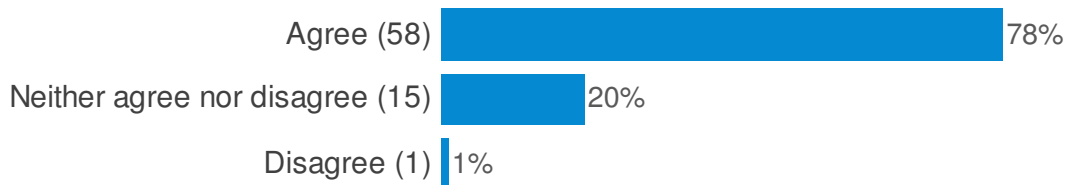


# Adopt North East Consultation

This report was generated on 29/08/18. Overall 76 respondents completed this questionnaire. The report has been filtered to show the responses for 'All Respondents'.

The following charts are restricted to the top 12 codes. Lists are restricted to the most recent 100 rows.

## Do you agree or disagree with the rationale for regionalising local authority adoption services and creating the new service – Adopt North East?



### Please give your reasons here:

- Should offer local children a greater chance of been adopted
- It should make adoption quicker and easier to match, taking children out of local authorities therefore giving a new start without threat of birth families being in locality.
- Would be better for the children that need to be placed outside their local Authority
- I broadly agree but need to hold in mind that this should not be seen as a cost cutting exercise and bigger is not always better - better is better
- The new service gives a positive message for all involved with adoption.
- Wider pool to match adopters/children, economies of scale, easier to share learning/collaborate
- Everyone receives the same, high quality service, no matter where they live.
- All adoptive children and families should receive support for as long as is necessary. regionalisation will mean that everyone should receive a good quality of service throughout the regions. what would be important is the services on offer must match the need not be a one size fits all.
- Regionalising services can produce economies of scale and theoretically greater choice of families for children when it comes to matching. However , my concern is that larger organisations may become impersonal for adopters who in the past have benefited from a sense of belonging. I also fear that Voluntary Adoption Agencies, who have specialised over the years in finding families for harder to place children, will not be there in the future to do so if they do not have guaranteed income at a level that makes them sustainable. Spot purchased commisioning arrangements could lead to this whereas contractual service level agreements could provide a positive basis for partnership working
- Regionalisation removes an element of customer choice, however it may result in the spreading of best practice.
- Pooling resources has to be better than relying on one service. More resources the better the service and the better outcomes for children and families
- I think it will be more effective in recruiting adopters and will reduce delay n finding placements for children
- Delay for children placed for adoption will hopefully be kept to a minimum.
- I can see how it would be beneficial having a larger pool of adopters to choose from and a more consistent service across the area, I just fear that standards will drop to the lowest rather than be pulled up to the highest.

## Adopt North East Consultation

## Please give your reasons here:

Agree with this vision of a new Regional Adoption Agency, think there will be some challenges but do feel positive and enthusiastic about this new development.

I think there are a number of strengths in that families will have access to a greater range of services and services will potentially be more accessible.

Hopefully more cohesive, extending options for prospective adopters and providing more opportunities for permanence for children.

I understand the need for reducing overlap and therefore money and the need to provide an outstanding service across the north east. I worry that some of the good will be lost along the way and the personal element that makes North Tyneside so good will go

I can see the rationale behind the model but I am unsure of the ability to implement a fair and consistent service across all the areas.

Better co-ordination of services rather than agencies competing for families.

Support being available throughout the children's lives is vital and so important.

Best practice will be better disseminated and support should be easier to obtain across council boundaries

It is a highly specialist area, where pooling skills, knowledge and motivated people can really benefit children and families. The safety themes mean that having a wider pool of families to consider should reduce the waiting time considerably.

better contact and control for communication

The bigger the better!

If the Government says we must do it then I guess we have too! However, this paragraph does not provide any rationale about why you have chosen to do it this way and how it might improve the adoptive experience

Working at a regional level should increase availability of staff with specialised knowledge e.g. re foetal alcohol syndrome for adopters across the region. It may also increase availability of suitable placements for children who can't easily be placed in a small local area.

I agree and hope it will provide greater transparency and access to a greater pool of available adoptive parents making the process quicker.

Resources are used better and services are less fragmented.

The vision seems good. The need for good preparation and support for as long as needed is good- and regional expertise in preparing children for adoption is vital. Be that direct or indirect with those involved.

What may work: increasing the pool of adopters for children waiting could decrease waiting times and improve outcomes for children; combining resources in areas such as post-adoption support may allow for more specialized and comprehensive services, delivered more promptly and consistently, by better trained staff with key specialisms. what may not: recruitment may be difficult as at present 'joe public' think 'if I want to adopt, i go to the council', and so achieving brand awareness, and an awareness among the community of the role of the RAA as a route to adopting, may be a challenge; if the regionalising agenda is used to in any way drive down staff terms and conditions morale will suffer, retention will suffer, the service to adopters and children will decline

As an adopter who adopted through different authority a child from a different region it made access to support very difficult.

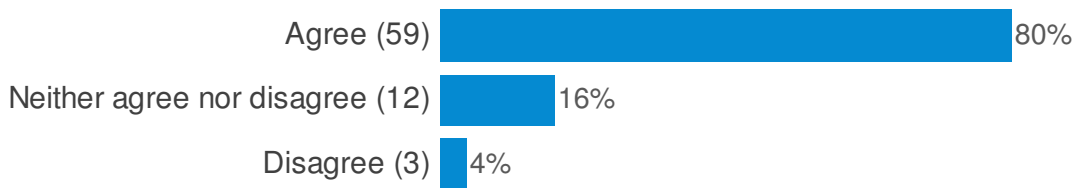
I agree ..but who describes and decides what an excellent service looks like.

It will hopefully provide an equitable service for all and therefore provide children with the best outcomes.

Please give your reasons here:

From what is described above it appears that there will be one office for this new RAA which is to cover the whole geographic area. There is no way that staff can be based in one team/office and be able to cover the areas needed so it is likely that there will be smaller offices branched out which is just the same as having the separate ones like now. Also, if adoption is being centralised and as the local authorities are to remain having the responsibility of the children, the relationships that are needed to allow prompt family finding will cease to exist and there will be a worse service given to the children. hopefully this will make the whole process better for all times been the most important Hopefully as everything is now under one roof all resorses will flow better.

**Do you agree or disagree that creating Adopt North East will improve marketing to adopters and create better coordinated messaging across the North East?**



Please give your reasons here:

Having one regional agency will improve marketing and will give clarity to adopters and sure a more consistent service to adopters and children

I agree that it should as long as it is run effectively

Yes pooling resources and staff experience\skills together

I think this has been the benefit of other RAA initiatives but would be interested how this includes the VAA partners

This is a new way forward and will inspire and improve services

Reasons adequately covered above

Pooled resources, knowledge and skills will help to improve marketing

Im not convinced that marketing for adoption will improve the uptake. people either want to adopt or not and if they do most would have the knowlege to appraoch the LA. perhaps time, resoeuces money could be better used imo

Pooled resources and a joined up strategic approach will hopefully produce a dividend

Greater budget capacity should result in better marketing techniques.

Brilliant idea and way forward

I think it will be clearer to the public about who they need to contact and I believe that recruitment will be improved as there will be less competition and more resources available

A consistent message across the region would be good

Amalgamating five adoption services with very different ways or working will present it's challenges however it will be good to have well co-ordinated messages and marketing across the North East.

This will happen in the future, however in the short term the new system may be confusing, so marketing will have many purposes.

Having the same criteria across the region will be good as will having just one point of contact

Larger workforce giving greater publicity potential.

Please give your reasons here:

Lots of fine words about principles but nothing about nitty, gritty practicalities

Yes I think there will be economies of scale for the agencies. However as a single adopter i chose to go to a voluntary agency and was disappointed by the unwelcoming approach of some LAs. I think having some specialist services/ skills for adopters outside the heterosexual couple mode is useful

easier to locate, access, communicate

They should be more people to help do this job

Pooling resources in this way SHOULD lead to improved communications both with prospective adopters but also with each other.

Until it's tried it's hard to tel whether it will improve recruitment or not.

One stop shop no mater where you live. We spent time talking to different councils which could have been saved with one orgasniation

Adopters aren't faced with making decisions around which authority to choose.

at present 'joe public' think 'i if i want to adopt, i go to the council', and resetting this way of thinking will take some time, which may hit recruitment.

I think sometimes children are better off being looked after away from their home area as its safer for the children and adopter.

the marketing and recruitment will depend less on the size of the organisation and more perhaps on the support of the parts of the organisation to do things differently and thinking hard about how it can increase the numbers of adopters etc.

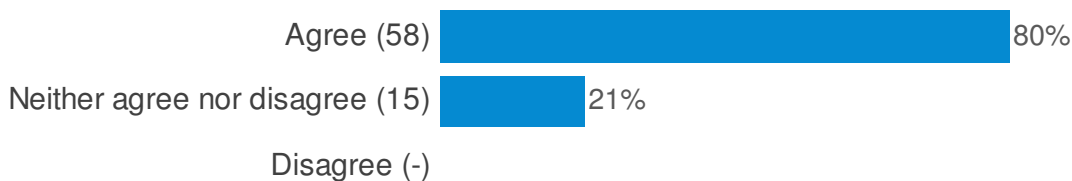
There will be one set of standards across the region and therefore not a postcode lottery for prospective adopters as to what level of service they will receive.

By creating one overarching RAA this will not magically increase the numbers of adopters there are out there. It just amalgamates the area covered into one big one which was made up previously from smaller ones but will be the same numbers. At least at the moment the adopters had a choice of who to go to if they didn't want, for whatever reason, to go with their own authority, they could go to a one nearby. After regionalisation their choice will be the RAA or a voluntary agency. Similar to my previous reply re the geographical area. There is still going to be a need to offices for training or information session in the different areas as adopters may not be able to get to the main office and this will put them off adopting.

it will mean alladopetrfs from across the region will be under one agency but children will be able to be placed from 5 agencies

It makes sense that potential adopters are able to gain access to the children needing adopting in one place, and that the authoroties are not competing against each other for the potential adoptive parents.

**Do you agree or disagree that creating Adopt North East will improve the recruitment and assessment process for adopters and their journey with Adopt North East will be timely?**



**Please give your reasons here:**

Again is true in theory but depends on how efficient the system is and how quickly all involved can make decisions

Better training and understanding of attachment will benefit both potential adopters and children from a very early stage and throughout. More desperately needs to be done in schools though.

Yes pooling staff skills and experiences together as well as resources. Having one RAA to approach will minimise confusion for adopters and encourage positive networks with prospective adopters

I think there is a great potential for this to be improved and streamlined but not to assume this would be an automatic result - will require some work

Everyone within the RAA has the opportunity to work together to improve the adopters journey

Very pleased to hear that therapeutic parenting will be included in training

Adopters won't have to wait for training

no prospective adopters or child should be left in an untimely process

I hope this is the case but there will still be the problem of having adoption medicals undertaken in time and of receiving a return on statutory checks and references in a timely fashion.

This depends on how much preparation has been done before the 'go live' date to ensure systems and processes are in place and that there is not a 'downturn' in recruitment during any transition phase.

Process seems sound and will enhance everyones journey

Agree that therapeutic parenting training and attachment is a good idea - what about working with the child's trauma?

More regular panels is a great idea for adopters and children.

It will reduce the confusion about where to go but I do not feel that it would improve the journey or assessment process.

Timeliness is very important for prospective adopters who make that most important initial contact with some trepidation and anxiety. Fortnightly panels are a good idea for approval and matching.

Would need to see how this works in practice. Will training programmes run locally, will service be personalised.

I agree that it will help with courses being held more frequently but feel that potetial adopters may be put off if thy have to travel too far. Also you would need to ensure that the relationship between adopters and the person assessing is not lost. It is hard enough to open up to an unknown person, if a different person shows up to each interview it will be impossible.

Should be a much quicker process and more efficient.

Hopefully, but travelling long distances to get to training can be a disincentive and the region covered is large.

more on your doorstep, give people a more comfrotable feeling

I would like to think so as again the more people involved should make it more organised and quicker

Monitoring and reporting on assessment timescales, a better training offer and more frequent panel meetings should support this

Theoretically it sounds good. Only time will tell.

I think it's really positive and should hopefully mean a fairly consistent experience for adopters in the early stages of the journey.

Potential adopters must know more about attachment issues and therapeutic parenting as a key part of training. It appears that accessing training, assessment and adoption panels will be quicker with the regional service.

**Please give your reasons here:**

Please can you try and ensure that therapeutic parenting techniques and information about early trauma / attachment difficulties is given a lot of emphasis pre and post adoption. Not having access to this information has made the adoption process so much harder than it should have been and has had a detrimental effect on our adopted child and the rest of the family. Knowledge makes a huge difference!! It took us five years to get help. This is too long!!

I absolutely agree that the training needs to cover the impact of trauma and how that leads to a need to parent down differently. I think there should be mentorship and/ or buddying systems available, ongoing training and sign posting to services. The team should include Adoptors with experience and a multidisciplinary team.

i think this will depend hugely on the underlying agenda to the regionalisation process, how well resourced the RAA will be, and how prepared leaders within the RAA are to advocate for resourcing as leaders within the organisation. strong leaders will advocate for their service and it's resource needs, in order to maintain quality. However, weak leaders may be complicit in under-resourcing for personal gain. much will depend on the standard of leadership. if regionalisation is used as an opportunity to drive down staff terms and conditions, then morale, retention, and service to adopters and children will decline. if it is used as an opportunity to push relentlessly for shorter turnarounds in assessment or preparation at the expense of quality, superficial gain in the short term may be made, but in the longer term children will be placed in less safe, less-resilient families with more frequent and tragic adoption disruptions. the goal should be quality AND quickness, and strong leaders will aim for both.

Timescales in my authority for adoption were ridiculous which as why I went through another authority.

I adopted through Newcastle City Council and found the service and time scales exemplary. If this standard is adhered to for the new organisation, that can only be a good thing. The concern is that standards are more difficult to maintain in larger organisations.

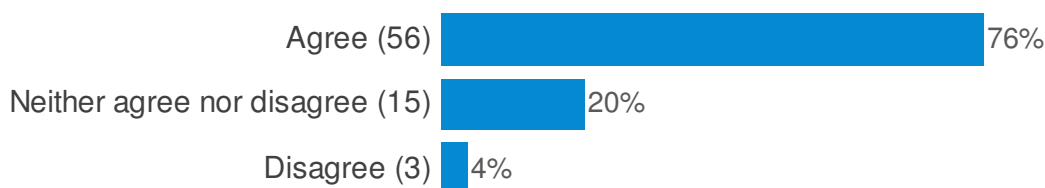
I think an emphasis on no delay at every phase of the adoption journey is a good thing

In theory, yes that is what should happen. In practice we will need to wait and see and as ever finite resources will have a part to play and how well a service functions.

Is it really that bad now that it needs to be addressed by such a massive overhaul?

this is a practice that will have to be tried and tested but as said before times are what need to be cut across the board

**Do you agree or disagree that creating a regionalised adoption agency - Adopt North East - efficient, high quality adoption support services can be provided for all families in the scope of the new service?**



**Please give your reasons here:**

Has already come to light that each region has own policies etc and is hard for all to make agreements Better working together with schools, parents and other agencies will really benefit children and parents who feel isolated.

No more post code lottery for services hopefully!

### Please give your reasons here:

One of my biggest hopes for RAA's is that they remove the postcode lottery of adoption support services and that adoptive and birth families have a range of quality support made available to them across the whole region.

This area of support requires high levels of resources from all involved and everyone affected by adoption should be given the same opportunity to be helped through the process.

Glad to see attention being paid to high-quality, post-adoption support. Some concern about service potentially becoming too monolithic and not being responsive to different needs in different areas.

Pooling resources, skills and experience, means a quality level of adoption support can be offered. It also means that the referral process should be more streamlined, and families will not have to wait so long to receive support. There will be more options of support available to families, so this will better meet their needs.

Yes as long as serious consideration is given to what "type" of support is needed and ultimately offered. One size, or variation of does not fit all. An example would be story stem or play therapy .... not ideal for highly traumatised children, specialist services within the region should be sought

We currently offer high quality Adoption Support Services across the North East but within your proposed collaborative we have only supported Tyneside therefore the proposal would allow all LAs to access services such as ours.

Discussions need to take place with the Voluntary Sector, who already have many of these services at their disposal. rather than re-inventing the wheel.

The RAA planning for self sufficiency may mean that other services currently available from VAA's will no longer be available in the market.

Scope of services means that adoptive families and birth families will have greater chance of meeting their needs and support

Pooled resources will create a greater service mass more able to cope/manage staffing issues and surges in demand

At present I am under North tyneside, I know everyone i am comfortable talking to them and going to them with my problems and asking for assistance. I do not feel this would be the case with a much larger organisation.

It will be good to have a single commissioning service and to be able to bring different therapeutic providers so that parents can be given choice of the different therapeutic services. It may be a challenge though taking into account the geographical spread of Adopt North East in terms of parents accessing such services dependant on where they live.

This will depend on resources, having consistency and fair access to services, and ensure VAA's are included in the overall service.

I have had a good experience and would like everyone to have the same as long as that standard remains high

I would need to review the finished model and the providers understanding of on going support.

Current adoption support in Newcastle is poor, in our experience with social workers being very reluctant to apply to the ASF. Any improvement on this would be very welcome.

Support services are vital and need to be seen as standard and not upon need as that usually means it us on Kate and makes parents feel inadequate which should be eradicated as offered to everyone.

It can be but will it? PAS needs to be for the entire period of an adoption and this assumption needs to be in place from the very beginning. Will sufficient resources be available?

It should do, but sometimes adopters need to feel they are accessing independent advocacy and something that stands outside the system in order to be able to challenge. This can be tricky to establish if the network is too closely entwined.

Again I would like to think this as long as there is plenty people in the system to cope with each job

**Please give your reasons here:**

Pooling resources and single contracts replacing multiples will support this. However, it is important that adoptive parents and children can access the right support at any time during their adoption. It is clear that many of the child's problems do not present until they are older and it is important that timely therapeutic support can be offered at any time when it is required.

I think equalising support services across the region is a good thing.

This is an essential part of the adoption service and it is important that people feel properly supported when needs be.

This is key in the adoption process. Parents and children need support from professionals who have a thorough understanding of trauma, neglect and how this can be remediated through therapeutic parenting techniques. Parents should not be left to manage often incredibly difficult behaviour. They need specialist support and therapeutic interventions, not professionals who are partially trained and don't have a thorough grounding in attachment disorder, brain development etc. Proper support and intervention I'm sure will reduce the level of the breakdown of adoptive placements.

Agree, please see earlier comments. Post adoption support for the family and schools is VITAL.

the RAA is a huge opportunity for this, but again this depends on resourcing and the strength of leadership to advocate for this.

Should provide a greater number of resources that can be accessed by adopters. Also possibly provide more in-house resources as skills from across the authorities come together. This will only work though if the large number of families seeking support are able to be assessed in a timely manner. Birth families and adopters will need to be well signposted to the RAA to take up the support available for them. Will only be efficient if the different computer systems used by the authorities are able to be brought together well.

My post adoption support has been limited due to both my home support and my daughters support leaving for alternative jobs. I was left with no support. My local authority said I had to get support from my daughters authority 140 miles away.

this should be the case if the councils grasp the opportunities and have the skill set available to them to make this happen

A strong focus needs to be on the post adoption support with adequate resources channelled into this area of the service.

As it is so bad now it can only get better. It is good that this is being looked at but the question should be is how were some agencies allowed to have ineffective services in the first place

again needs to be tried and tested

Only if procurement through a single commissioning is best for the child and not just best for Adopt North East.

In my experience as an adoptive parent there is very little post adoptive support and there is a worry that this could be a cost cutting exercise where you will be getting less people doing more work.

**We are keen to ensure that this consultation reaches people from across the region; please would you help us to confirm this by providing the first five digits of your postcode in the space below?**

NE35R	NE26 2N	DH2 1A	SR5 2T	TS17 6	ne25 8	Ts18 5	DH33J
ne81h	NE29 9LE	NE10 0	NE34 7	ne360	NE8	NE15 5	ne28 7
Ne259	dh8 9qt	NE26 2	ne11 9	NE30 3	NE30 3	ne303	NE96B
NE65 0	NE17R	SR5 2T	TS159	NE6	NE29 8	DH5 8Q	SR2 8
Ne28 7	Ne30 3	ts17 5	Sr5 1n	ne28 6	TS26 8	Ts15 9	DH3 2D
ne11	NE34 9	TS10 1	DH4 4YA	NE13 9	Ne65T	NE8 3JH	DH9 6E



## Adopt North East Consultation

**We are keen to ensure that this consultation reaches people from across the region; please would you help us to confirm this by providing the first five digits of your postcode in the space below?**

---

ts17 0

---

ne23 6

---

NE259

---

Ne262n

---

Dh3 3y

---

ne27 0

---

NE404

---

NE244

---

NE27 0

---

NE42 6

---

NE30 2LZ

---

NE13 7

---

ne32

---

NE139

---

ne63l

---

NE12 9

---

976bs

---

NE9 6D