

## **STATEMENT FROM CLLR DINE ROMERO – 13<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2025**

Thank you Chair for allowing me to make this short statement

I am the chair of the Joint Adoption West Scrutiny Panel (JAWSP), we are made up for several lay members who are adopters, and councillors from the appropriate scrutiny panels or committees at our partner local authorities.

The panel was set up to provide, obviously, scrutiny, of the processes and to consider issues such as addressing the sufficiency gap. To be clear, we do not scrutinise actual adoptions, nor people involved in individual adoptions.

The JAWSP were asked to give our views on the best way forward, i.e. whether to continue with Adoption West as it is, or to consider alternative ways of providing this service across our collective local authorities.

The joint scrutiny panel believe that there is little to gained from fundamentally changing the delivery model, and hope that by not changing the model AW will be able to focus on the challenges such as harder to place children, including black and ethnic minority children, children with disabilities, older children and sibling groups. As well improving other parts of the service such as life stories.

I hope you agree with me that Adoption West should be allowed to focus on building on the positive work of the last 6 years, rather than seeking to test an untried delivery model.

Lastly, I would like to ask if the cabinet has any view on the areas of work they would like the scrutiny panel to consider working on, in addition to those already highlighted?

Finally, finally I apologise as I may need to leave before the debate, but I am expected at Bath Welcomes Refugees 10-year anniversary.

I am sure you would like me to pass on your congratulations to this organisation and thank them for the work they have done and continue to do in supporting people fleeing war and atrocities who start new lives here in Bath and North East Somerset.