



ÚDARÁS UCHTÁLA na hÉIREANN
THE ADOPTION AUTHORITY of IRELAND

Adoption Authority of Ireland Business Plan 2023

Adoption Authority of Ireland



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A photograph of a dense forest with tall, slender trees and lush green foliage. A semi-transparent blue horizontal band is overlaid across the middle of the image, containing the word "Foreword" in white text.

Foreword

Foreword

The Adoption Authority of Ireland (AAI) is pleased to present the 2023 Business Plan. The Business Plan for 2023 sets out the key actions that enable the AAI to deliver on its strategic objectives for 2022-2024.

Building on a strong performance from previous years the AAI now looks to grow further as a robust and innovative organisation.

In addition to a commitment to maintain and further develop our current services and operations, this plan will seek to build on the positive work that the AAI has done during 2022 to implement the Birth Information and Tracing Act 2022. 2022 saw considerable restructuring and a significant rise in staff numbers. The AAI has grown from a team of 32 staff at the beginning of 2022 to 53 staff at the beginning of 2023.

A key priority for 2023 will be continuing to grow a strong, positive and diverse workplace ensuring our staff are fully supported throughout their work. The safeguarding and transfer to the AAI of certain records relating to the birth, adoption and care of certain persons, as well as the appropriate storage of all adoption records under the AAI's stewardship, will be a key feature of the AAI's work during 2023 and beyond. The ability of the AAI to continue to complete all adoption orders in a timely and efficient manner remains of the foremost importance for 2023.

The AAI 2023 Business Plan demonstrates our commitment to being recognised as the centre of excellence and principal authoritative source of information on all aspects of adoption and as a provider and regulator of high quality adoption services in Ireland.



Orlaith Traynor
Chairperson,
Adoption Authority of
Ireland



Philip Crosby
Interim Chief Executive
Officer,
Adoption Authority of
Ireland

A photograph of two young girls in a field of yellow dandelions. They are both wearing bright blue raincoats. The girl in the foreground is also wearing blue jeans and yellow rubber boots, and she is reaching up to touch an orange Easter egg with a butterfly design hanging from a tree branch. The girl behind her is wearing red pants and patterned boots. The background is a lush green field with many yellow flowers and trees.

About this Plan

About this Plan

The 2023 Business Plan has been developed alongside the 2022-2024 Strategic Plan. It outlines all actions to be completed by the AAI during 2023 in order to achieve the key milestones across all priorities, goals and objectives.

In the AAI, our business planning process takes place annually. Through this process, each unit identifies key actions which enable us to deliver on our strategic objectives.

The AAI Senior Management Team (SMT) and the Board are committed to continuing to provide the highest level of service to all of our stakeholders, while working effectively to implement all actions as set out in the Strategic Plan.

The activities included in the 2023 Business Plan take account of the priorities agreed during the annual budgetary process.

This document has been divided into three different sections as outlined below:



Section 1: Overview

Overview of the AAI, outlining the mission, vision and key principles under which the AAI operates.



Section 2: Review of 2022 and Business Plan 2023

Overview of activities conducted in 2022.

Outlines the priorities, strategic goals, objectives and actions which have been identified by the AAI in order to continue to provide the highest levels of service throughout 2023. For each strategic action identified, any agreed key performance indicators' expected start and completion date and action owner have also been included.



Section 3: Implementation Roadmap

Outlines the implementation roadmap required to deliver the identified priorities, objectives and actions throughout 2023.

A photograph of children's legs and feet in rain gear. On the left, a child wears a red puffy jacket, blue and white striped socks, and blue rubber boots with black mud on the soles. On the right, a child wears a dark blue jacket, dark blue cargo pants, and green rubber boots with yellow tops and black mud on the soles. The ground is dark and muddy.

AAI Overview

AAI Overview

AAI: Formation and Purpose

The AAI is an independent quasi-judicial body under the aegis of the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY), and was established on 1 November 2010 under the Adoption Act 2010. The AAI is also, in line with The Hague Convention on the Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption, the central authority for intercountry adoption (ICA) in Ireland. The purpose of the Adoption Act 2010 is to improve standards in both domestic adoption (DA) and ICA.

Legal adoption was first introduced in Ireland under the 1952 Adoption Act. The 1952 Act was enacted on 1 January 1953 and the Adoption Board was established under this Act. The Adoption Board had the sole right to grant or refuse to grant adoption orders. This right is now vested in the AAI under the current 2010 legislation.

The functions of the AAI are set out in Section 96 of the Adoption Act 2010. These include functions of an operational, judicial and quasi-judicial nature in relation to the adoption process itself, as provided for under the Act, but also relating to the AAI's designation as the central authority for the 1993 Hague Convention on the Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption. In addition, the AAI has registration, regulatory and research functions.

Birth Information and Tracing Act, 2022

The Birth Information and Tracing Act 2022 (BITA) was signed into law on 30 June 2022. This landmark legislation provides a full and clear right of access to birth certificates and birth and early life information for all persons who were adopted, boarded out, nursed out, the subject of an illegal birth registration or who otherwise have questions in relation to their origins. It also allows for access to information by next of kin in certain circumstances.

The new law establishes a Contact Preference Register and a robust tracing service, as well as a range of new bespoke measures to address issues arising for people affected by illegal birth registration. It also mandates the safeguarding of adoption records by the AAI.

Areas of Work

The AAI's obligations span the following areas:

Domestic Adoption: where a child who is resident in Ireland is adopted by a person or couple who is/are also resident in Ireland.

Intercountry Adoption: where persons resident in Ireland decide to adopt a child who is resident in a country other than Ireland.

Records Team: maintain the Contact Preference Register and support service users in exercising their rights under the Birth Information and Tracing Act 2022.

Social Work: review and monitor social work practice across adoption processes, as well as information, advice and support about any issue relating to adoption and providing mediation and counselling.

Accreditation: assess and appropriately accredit adoption-related bodies and activities to comply with Irish adoption law.

Research: as part of its statutory function, the AAI is required to undertake or assist in research projects and activities relating to adoption services.

Archives: responsible for the acquisition, preservation, description and providing access to historical records under the National Archives Acts, 1986-2018.

AAI's Customer Charter

The AAI aspires to provide a professional, efficient and courteous service to all customers, in accordance with the 12 principles of quality customer service for government departments and public bodies.

Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty

All public bodies in Ireland have a statutory duty to eliminate discrimination, promote equality and protect the human rights of their staff, service users and everyone affected by their policies and plans. This is an obligation originated in Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Act 2014.

Having regard to the current, and anticipated future size, functions and staff levels of the organisation, the AAI commits to reviewing its activities against the Human Rights and Equality Act 2014, (found in strategy Goal 5.1/Action 5.1.1.6) and maintaining a register of any issues, and mitigating steps to address these issues. This register will be available to the public on request, and will be referenced in the AAI's Annual Report.

AAI Overview



Mission and Vision

"To ensure the provision of the highest possible standards of adoption related services, throughout the lifelong adoption process, with the best interest of children as the first and paramount objective"

- AAI Mission



"To be recognised as the centre of excellence and principal authoritative source of information on all aspects of adoption and as a provider and regulator of high quality adoption services"

- AAI Vision



Principles and Values

The principles and values which underpin the AAI's mission, and vision, will remain unchanged and also were referenced extensively in the generation of the strategic priorities and goals for the next three years. They are outlined below:

- **Child-centredness:** Focusing on the best interests of the child as paramount in the adoption process with consideration of their lifelong needs. Ensuring that the child's voice is heard and responded to meaningfully in the adoption process.
- **Accountability** Through ethical practice and transparency; modus operandi which is open to scrutiny, distinguished by impartiality and equity and guided by honest, proper, accountable and ethical adoption practice. Committed to delivering services in an effective and efficient manner to achieve value for money.
- **Quality Services:** Provide the highest quality services in adoption based on law and best practice, alongside developing and retaining experts in the field (including commitment to continuous improvement of services).
- **Respect:** Committed to treating all stakeholders in the adoption process or otherwise with dignity, respect and courtesy. Listening, learning and empowering organisation for all those working or affected by adoption services and listen and respect staff ensuring the AAI remains a good place to work.

Review of 2022



Review of 2022

Strategic Plan and annual business planning

In February 2022, the AAI launched its 2022-2024 Strategic Plan. The Plan is the blueprint for the AAI to continue to provide the highest possible standard of adoption services in Ireland, and it outlines the key priorities, goals, objectives and actions to enable this.

The business planning process takes place annually in the AAI. The 2022-2024 Strategic Plan serves as the overarching guide for annual business planning throughout this period. The key components of the Business Plan for 2022 were derived from the Strategic Plan, while several other unplanned activities also took place throughout the year.

2022 proved to be a challenging year for the AAI, but also a period of significant growth. It marked the full return to the workplace for employees following significant COVID-19 restrictions, and the Birth Information and Tracing Act 2022 was signed into law. These events, along with others, significantly shaped the AAI's commitments for the year, and our response to these changes showed adaptability and resilience throughout our organisation.

Birth Information and Tracing Act

The planning for and implementation of The Birth Information and Tracing Act (2022) resulted in the most significant workforce changes for the AAI since AAI's foundation in 2010. There were significant changes made to our organisational structure. Staffing requirements to support the planning and implementation of the Act were identified, and the AAI's staff increased from 32 at the start of 2022 to 53 at the beginning of 2023. The Information Services and Records Unit was established to assist stakeholders with post-adoption information and services, and we welcomed its director, Ross Higgins.

Throughout this period of intense change for the organisation, we placed a strong focus on measuring workload imbalances throughout our expanding team by conducting an end-to-end workflow review, and ensured our staff was supported through our Wellness Programme.

A Public Relations Plan, including a public information campaign, was launched to raise awareness of the new services arising from the Birth Information and Tracing Act. We also designed and launched [birthinginfo.ie](https://www.birthinginfo.ie).

Continued excellence in our day-to-day delivery of adoption services and compliance

Throughout 2022, we continued to deliver on our commitment to provide excellent adoption services to the public at all times, maintaining our focus on our key values of child-centredness, quality, accountability and respect.

We performed a review of our Social Work practices with the implementation of our Social Work Practice Framework, which will continue into 2023.

We conducted an extensive data security review, which identified a number of areas for improvement. These will be progressed during 2023.

We continued to work closely with our line department, as well as key stakeholders during 2022 on a number of initiatives.

The digitisation of the AAI's adoption records continued and extensive work on the organisation's document management system was completed. This work will be a key feature for 2023.

Research

We continued our focus to build our research capabilities through our Research Unit.

In 2022, we published the fourth of our background reports on ICA, and commenced a recruitment drive for a new study to document the experience of ICA in Ireland. We finished data collection and analysis for a study on the Irish domestic adoption process, and completed various requests for rapid research by the AAI's CEO and Board.

We continue to develop and promote our internal library, and facilitate its use by staff.

We presented AAI research at two Irish conferences, and the Research Officer (RO) continued in her role as Chair of the Adoption Research Network of Ireland.

We worked with the Research Subcommittee to draft a new three-year Research Strategy for 2023-2026.

A close-up, low-angle shot of a person's legs and feet as they walk on a muddy, uneven path. The person is wearing a bright yellow raincoat, brown cargo pants, and tan lace-up boots. Their grey socks are visible at the top of the boots. The ground is dark brown and covered in mud and small twigs. The background is blurred, showing a light-colored surface, possibly a body of water or a path. A semi-transparent blue horizontal band is overlaid across the middle of the image, containing the text "Business Plan 2023" in white.







Business Plan 2023

Business Plan 2023

Overview

The Business Plan for 2023 has been developed with the support, review and feedback of the AAI Board, SMT and all other relevant staff. Senior managers in turn consulted with their staff to ensure feedback was gathered across the organisation. As a result, the plan developed takes into account staff level concerns and develops buy-in to ensure the plan can be delivered over the timeframe specified.

Six key priorities with associated goals, objectives, and underlying actions have been developed in order to frame the delivery of the 2023 Business Plan. These priorities are a representation of the full range of services that the AAI provides, and all those who have contributed to its development are fully committed to ensuring the AAI meet their strategic goals. The six key priorities driving the Business Plan for the AAI for 2023 and the key strategic goals are highlighted below.

Priorities	Goals		
 <p>1. The child is the foremost priority and their best interests should be pursued in all adoption cases.</p>	1.1. The primary goal of all adoptions is that the best interests of the child/young person are heard throughout the adoption process and they are responded to in a timely and meaningful manner throughout.		
 <p>2. Achieve the highest standards of adoption services.</p>	2.1 Ensure that all relevant parties can exercise their right to be heard throughout the full adoption process and support legal aid applications where required for parents.	2.2 Achieve the highest standard in the regulation and operation of the adoption services provided directly by the AAI or by those agencies accredited by the AAI.	
 <p>3. Effectively implement the Birth Information and Tracing Act.</p>	3.1 Ensure that the Birth Information and Tracing Act continues to be operationalised.	3.2 Develop an organisation that is ready to adapt quickly to changes in legislation.	
 <p>4. Empower our people and deliver effective operations.</p>	4.1 Build and maintain a workforce that has the capability, capacity and adaptability to achieve their career ambitions, and meet the changing needs of the adoption landscape.	4.2 Develop the AAI's organisation structure, its processes, and technology to enable the delivery of the Strategic Plan.	
 <p>5. Attain robust governance and supportive stakeholder relationships.</p>	5.1 Develop effective and accountable governance, risk management and compliance arrangements.	5.2 Progress strong working relationships and collaboration with adoption stakeholders.	5.3 Improve awareness and understanding of the adoption process among stakeholders and the wider public.
 <p>6. Foster a culture of innovation.</p>	6.1 Build and maintain innovative methods to ensure that the adoption services provided by the AAI, and those agencies accredited by the AAI, are of world-class standard.	6.2 Extend and develop capacity of Research Unit to enable the AAI to show clear research leadership in its field.	

A detailed breakdown of each priority including goals, objectives, operational actions, owners, key performance indicators and timeline for completion, required to fully implement this plan, is outlined in the following sections.

Business Plan 2023



1

Priority 1

The child is the foremost priority and their best interests should be pursued in all adoption cases

Goal 1.1

The primary goal of all adoptions is that the best interests of the child/young person are heard throughout the adoption process and they are responded to in a timely and meaningful manner throughout.

Objective 1.1.1: Incorporate the views and interests of the child/young person in all stages of the adoption process, giving due consideration to the age and maturity of the child.

Actions	KPI	Start date	End date	Owner	Strategic Plan ref.
Continue to detail all interactions and consultations with the child/young person (i.e. hearing from child/young person) throughout their adoption case. Continue to ensure, where age appropriate, their view on their adoption is sought and that there is a record of their view.	For every adoption order made for a child over 7, where appropriate, there's a record on the file of them being consulted at the hearing.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	DOO	1.1.1.1
Review and amend (if required), the AAI's policies and procedures to ensure that all adoption orders incorporate the views of the child, giving due weight to the age and maturity of the child.	Policies amended as required.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	DOO	1.1.1.2

Objective 1.1.2: Incorporate all requests from the child/young person to be heard as part of the adoption process.

Actions	KPI	Start date	End date	Owner	Strategic Plan ref.
Continue to detail all requests from the child/young person to be heard by the AAI's Board.	Number of fully captured requests discussed in scheduled hearings and facilitated by the Board as a percentage of number of requests received.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	DOO	1.1.2.1

Business Plan 2023



1

Priority 1

The child is the foremost priority and their best interests should be pursued in all adoption cases

Goal 1.1 (continued)

The primary goal of all adoptions is that the best interests of the child/young person are heard throughout the adoption process and they are responded to in a timely and meaningful manner throughout.

Objective 1.1.3: Provide sufficient and appropriate information to enable the child/young person to make a free and informed decision regarding their adoption.

Actions	KPI	Start date	End date	Owner	Strategic Plan ref.
Review, refine and re-implement a set of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to be 'used' in all interactions with a child/young person by the AAI staff.	All SOPs updated and operationalised. Reviews to be done annually.	Q2 2023	Q4 2023	DOO	1.1.3.1
Develop and make readily available a set of frequently asked questions to guide interactions with a child/young person.	Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) reviewed, updated and published on the AAI's website.	Q1 2023	Q3 2023	DOO	1.1.3.2
Refine existing mechanism for data capture for all stages in the adoption process and make any necessary adjustments for additional data that needs to be captured.	Number of new data points added throughout the data capture process as a percentage of new data points identified needing to be added.	Q4 2023	Q4 2023	DISR/DOO	1.1.3.3

Objective 1.1.4: Ensure consistency in practice when hearing from the child or young person.

Actions	KPI	Start date	End date	Owner	Strategic Plan ref.
Conduct an annual review and update, if required, of SOPs and FAQs. This is an ongoing process which is actioned, reviewed, and updated on a regular basis.	All SOPs and FAQs are reviewed annually. Amendments made as required.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	DOO	1.1.4.1

Business Plan 2023



1

Priority 1

The child is the foremost priority and their best interests should be pursued in all adoption cases

Goal 1.1 (continued)

The primary goal of all adoptions is that the best interests of the child/young person are heard throughout the adoption process and they are responded to in a timely and meaningful manner throughout.

Objective 1.1.5: Engage with the Department and Minister to support the process of ensuring that the child/young person's views are considered in all adoption proceedings.

Actions	KPI	Start date	End date	Owner	Strategic Plan ref.
Define an agreed schedule for formal meetings/interactions with the Department and Minister on a yearly basis.	Annual meeting schedule completed and agreed between the DCEDIY, the Minister and the AAI.	Q1 2023	Q1 2023	CEO/Board	1.1.5.1
Complete any SOP and FAQ updates that are required based on updated guidance from the Department and Minister on any interactions with child/young person in the adoption process.	Number of amendments to SOPs and FAQs identified from meetings held with the DCEDIY and the Minister that are implemented as a percentage of the total amendments required.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	CEO/Board	1.1.5.2

Business Plan 2023



2

Priority 2

Achieve the highest standards of adoption services

Goal 2.1

Ensure that all relevant parties can exercise their right to be heard throughout the full adoption process and support legal aid applications where required for parents.

Objective 2.1.1: Ensure that all relevant parties are fully informed of their right to be heard in the adoption process.

Actions	KPI	Start date	End date	Owner	Strategic Plan ref.
Continue to detail and facilitate all appropriate requests based on statutory obligations from all relevant stakeholders involved in the adoption processes to be heard by the AAI's Board.	All appropriate requests based on statutory obligations to be heard before the Board as part of an adoption process are facilitated.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	Board/DOO	2.1.1.1
Develop protocol with DCEDIY and Legal Aid Board.	Protocol developed and implemented.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	DOO	2.1.1.3

Objective 2.1.2: Facilitate all relevant parties in their right to be heard during the adoption process.

Actions	KPI	Start date	End date	Owner	Strategic Plan ref.
Continue to detail all interactions with all stakeholders throughout their adoption application. Ensure all parties have been consulted and contacted and provided with hearing dates on request or as required under the legislation..	All parties consulted.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	DOO	2.1.2.1

Business Plan 2023



2

Priority 2

Achieve the highest standards of adoption services

Goal 2.1 (continued)

Ensure that all relevant parties can exercise their right to be heard throughout the full adoption process and support legal aid applications where required for parents.

Objective 2.1.3: Ensure the AAI provides sufficient and appropriate information to enable relevant parties to make a free and informed decision regarding adoption.

Actions	KPI	Start date	End date	Owner	Strategic Plan ref.
Review, refine and reimplement a set of SOPs to be used in all interactions with stakeholders by AAI staff.	Number of SOPs reviewed and reimplemented regarding stakeholder interaction as a percentage of total number of SOPs regarding stakeholder interactions.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	DISR/DOO	2.1.3.1
Develop and make readily available a set of frequently asked questions to guide interactions with all stakeholders (see Action 1.1.3.2 for FAQ regarding child/young persons) of the AAI.	FAQ document is completed and available on AAI's website.	Q2 2023	Q4 2023	DOO	2.1.3.2
Refine existing mechanism for data capture for all stages in the adoption process and make any necessary adjustments for additional data that needs to be captured.	Number of new data points added throughout the data capture process as a percentage of new data points identified to be added.	Q4 2023	Q4 2023	DOO	2.1.3.3

Business Plan 2023



2

Priority 2

Achieve the highest standards of adoption services

Goal 2.2

Achieve the highest standard in the regulation and operation of the adoption services provided directly by the AAI or by those agencies accredited by the AAI.

Objective 2.2.1: Support and oversee the development of comprehensive, high quality and integrated adoption services, including collaboration with all relevant stakeholders.

Actions	KPI	Start date	End date	Owner	Strategic Plan ref.
Complete a Hague Compliance review against EU and worldwide adoption processes, incorporating lessons learned and best practice solutions, with a view to enhancing adoption services in Ireland. This is an ongoing process which is actioned, reviewed, and updated on a regular basis.	Compliance review completed.	Q3 2023	Q4 2023	DOO	2.2.1.1

Objective 2.2.2: Maintain active oversight of all accredited agencies, including the re-accreditation and registration against approved regulations.

Actions	KPI	Start date	End date	Owner	Strategic Plan ref.
Conduct a review of the AAI's accreditation processes to determine any changes that need to be implemented.	Complete accredited agency process review and identify any required changes.	Q1 2023	Q2 2023	HOC	2.2.2.1
Complete reaccreditation and compliance processes as required. This is an ongoing process which is actioned, reviewed and updated on a regular basis.	Completion of reaccreditation process for all relevant bodies. Ensure compliance reporting is complete.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	HOC	2.2.2.2

Business Plan 2023



2

Priority 2

Achieve the highest standards of adoption services

Goal 2.2 (continued)

Achieve the highest standard in the regulation and operation of the adoption services provided directly by the AAI or by those agencies accredited by the AAI.

Objective 2.2.3: Maintain all statutory and non-statutory registers.					
Actions	KPI	Start date	End date	Owner	Strategic Plan ref.
Define a schedule for the review and update of all registers.	Schedule defined for the review and update to all registers.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	SMT	2.2.3.1
Any corrections to records and registers are prioritised and completed in a defined period.	Corrections to the registers and records completed in the quarter that they were identified.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	SMT	2.2.3.2

Business Plan 2023



2

Priority 2

Achieve the highest standards of adoption services

Goal 2.2 (continued)

Achieve the highest standard in the regulation and operation of the adoption services provided directly by the AAI or by those agencies accredited by the AAI.

Objective 2.2.4: Make informed and timely decisions in all stages of the AAI's service processes.					
Actions	KPI	Start date	End date	Owner	Strategic Plan ref.
Review agreed internal and external communication protocols concerning the timely transfer of data/information to ensure AAI services can be provided efficiently.	Revisions/updates will define KPIs for feedback.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	DOO/DISR/PSW	2.2.4.1
Ensure declarations of eligibility and suitability to adopt are completed within the target timeframes.	Number of declarations completed within the timeframe as a percentage of total declarations completed.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	DOO/Unit Managers	2.2.4.2
Ensure that all adoption orders are processed before the child/young person reaches their 18th birthday.	All adoption orders completed before the young person's 18th birthday.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	Board/DOO	2.2.4.3
Ensure that all routine and non-routine processing of the recognition of ICA orders are processed within the agreed target timeframe.	All recognition of ICA completed within the agreed timeframe.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	DOO/ICA Unit Manager	2.2.4.4
Ensure that all Article 17 referrals are processed within the agreed target timeframe.	All referrals are processed within the agreed timeframe.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	DOO/ICA Unit Manager	2.2.4.5
Ensure that all routine and non-routine decisions to release personal, sensitive information to adult adoptees and birth parents are completed within the agreed target timeframe.	All data subject access requests and birth information release requests are completed within the statutory timeframe.	Q1 2023	Q3 2023	DISR/SMT	2.2.4.6

Business Plan 2023



3

Priority 3
Effectively implement legislation.

Goal 3.1

Ensure that the Birth Information and Tracing Act continues to be operationalised.

Objective 3.1.2: Operationalise the Birth Information and Tracing Act, tracking metrics and KPIs to ensure effectiveness and consistency.					
Actions	KPI	Start date	End date	Owner	Strategic Plan ref.
Harmonise and update protocols, procedures and templates with all service user scenarios encountered from the first year of operation of the Birth Information and Tracing Act.	Protocols, procedures and templates reviewed and in place.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	DISR	BP23 3.1
Track and monitor for information requests for relevant persons, qualifying persons; date of submission; date of acknowledgment; date of information session; date of information release; date of review request; and records types requested.	Turnaround times for different types of information requested are recorded and analysed.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	DISR	BP23 3.2
Track and monitor number of applications; locations of applicants and types of contact preferences for adoptees and relatives on the Contact Preference Register.	Success/match rate recorded for information requests.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	DISR	BP23 3.3
Participate in the statutory review under Section 70 of the Birth Information and Tracing Act 2022 in the manner as may be prescribed by the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability Integration and Youth.	Review conducted.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	DISR	BP23 3.4

Business Plan 2023



3

Priority 3
Effectively implement legislation.

Goal 3.2

Develop an organisation that is ready to adapt quickly to changes in legislation.

Objective 3.2.1: Work with the Government and policy makers to ensure that the AAI's commentary is considered in decision-making processes for the development of adoption related policy and legislation.

Actions	KPI	Start date	End date	Owner	Strategic Plan ref.
Develop formal schedule of engagement with identified Government representatives and policy makers to ensure that the AAI is kept updated on any revised guidelines and regulations.	Annual meeting schedule completed and agreed between the Government minister, policy makers and the AAI.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	CEO	3.2.1.1
Engage with Government and key related Departments to support the early stages of development and roll-out of future changes or enactment of changes in legislation when identified.	Annual meeting schedule completed and agreed between the Government minister, policy makers and the AAI.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	CEO	3.2.1.2

Objective 3.2.2: Develop a plan to respond to the implementation of possible Donor-Assisted Human Reproduction and Surrogacy legislation, and additional relevant legislation which may impact the remit of the AAI and its services and operations.

Actions	KPI	Start date	End date	Owner	Strategic Plan ref.
Conduct initial research exercises to develop an understanding of requirements and possible responsibilities which might be required by the AAI in response to future Donor-Assisted Human Reproduction and Surrogacy legislation.	Commence procurement process for specialist to conduct research into this area.	Q4 2023	Q4 2023	RO	3.2.2.1

Business Plan 2023



4

Priority 4

Empower our people and deliver effective operations

Goal 4.1

Build and maintain a workforce that has the capability, capacity and adaptability to achieve their career ambitions, and meet the changing needs of the adoption landscape.

Objective 4.1.1: Offer training and development opportunities to staff in a way that is readily available and fair, to allow them to achieve their career ambitions and align their work to support the implementation of the AAI's Strategic Plan.

Actions	KPI	Start date	End date	Owner	Strategic Plan ref.
Identify future capability requirements in order to successfully deliver the AAI's duties.	Identify and approve capability/training requirements.	Q3 2023	Q4 2023	HHR/SD	4.1.1.1
Review existing staff training plan and design and implement future training plan.	Review existing training plan. Design and approve future training plan.	Q2 2023	Q3 2023	HHR/SD	4.1.1.3
Review and update staff handbook with updated training plans for all staff.	Staff handbook is updated with revised training plans.	Q1 2023	Q3 2023	HHR/SD	4.1.1.4

Objective 4.1.2: Implement a robust staff retention, development and succession programme to ensure continuity of services, knowledge retention and organisation development.

Actions	KPI	Start date	End date	Owner	Strategic Plan ref.
Develop a succession planning model for key management and technical roles, and a business continuity model.	Implement succession model plan and business continuity model.	Q3 2023	Q4 2023	SMT	4.1.2.1
Develop and implement flexible working/blended working policy and guidelines.	Implement flexible/remote working policies and guidelines.	Q1 2023	Q2 2023	HHR/SD	4.1.2.4

Objective 4.1.3: Create an environment in which staff can grow and contribute to the success of the AAI.

Actions	KPI	Start date	End date	Owner	Strategic Plan ref.
Ensure the staff retention program and People Strategy goals are outlined clearly in the staff handbook.	Staff Handbook is updated with Staff Retention and People Strategy.	Q3 2023	Q4 2023	HHR/SD/SMT	4.1.3.3

Business Plan 2023



4

Priority 4

Empower our people and deliver effective operations

Goal 4.2

Develop the AAI's organisation structure, its processes, and technology to enable the delivery of the Strategic Plan.

Objective 4.2.1: Ensure that all of the AAI functions have the support, capacity and skills required to perform their duties to the highest standard.

Actions	KPI	Start date	End date	Owner	Strategic Plan ref.
Conduct a staff training needs assessment.	Assessment completed and recommendations provided.	Q2 2023	Q4 2023	HHR/SD	BP23 4.1
Collaborate with line department for inputs into workforce planning and a people strategy.	Discussions with parent department complete.	Q2 2023	Q4 2023	HHR/SD	BP23 4.2
Continue to develop and update the induction programme for new staff.	Induction programme reviewed and continuously updated.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	HHR/SD	BP23 4.3
Continue to support staff through the wellness programme.	Wellness programme provisioned, reviewed and updated throughout 2023.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	HHR/SD	BP23 4.4

Objective 4.2.3: Re-establish roles and responsibilities of functions and improve work allocation across the organisation to improve the efficiency of workflow and improve productivity.

Actions	KPI	Start date	End date	Owner	Strategic Plan ref.
Identify any additional staffing needs and review for appropriateness before business case creation and submission.	Staffing needs identified as part of workforce plan (Action 3.1.1.6).	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	HHR/SD	4.2.3.3

Business Plan 2023



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Priority 4

Empower our people and deliver effective operations

Goal 4.2 (Continued)

Develop the AAI's organisation structure, its processes, and technology to enable the delivery of the Strategic Plan.

Objective 4.2.4: Optimise processes and operations to ensure high quality provision of all services to the public.					
Actions	KPI	Start date	End date	Owner	Strategic Plan ref.
Establish a mechanism to ensure the Procurement Plan is implemented effectively, and value for money is achieved in all procurement activities.	Implement and maintain Procurement Plan.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	HOC	4.2.4.3
Complete a review of existing facilities, buildings and systems and determine their suitability for the AAI.	Review completed and future needs assessed.	Q2 2023	Q3 2023	HOC	4.2.4.4
Maintain efficient and effective management of facilities, buildings and systems including the upgrading of office and storage units where required.	Maintain a register of all buildings and facilities. Identify any requiring upgrade.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	HOC/CEO	4.2.4.5
Develop and promote the Sustainability and Energy Efficient Strategy.	Approve Climate Action Road Map.	Q1 2023	Q1 2023	HOC	4.2.4.6
Develop clear policies and protocols for the delivery of social work in the AAI.	Each area of social work practice will have a distinct policy and standard operating procedure attached to it.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	PSW	4.2.4.8

Business Plan 2023



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Priority 4

Empower our people and deliver effective operations

Goal 4.2 (Continued)

Develop the AAI's organisation structure, its processes, and technology to enable the delivery of the Strategic Plan.

Objective 4.2.4 (continued): Optimise processes and operations to ensure high quality provision of all services to the public.

Actions	KPI	Start date	End date	Owner	Strategic Plan ref.
Adapt existing document management system for use by Social Work Team and develop protocol for use of system.	All case management related material being completed in document management system.	Q1 2023	Q1 2023	PSW	4.2.4.9
Ensure full adherence of the Health and Safety protocols in place and review on an annual basis.	Annual reviews completed and zero issues found.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	HOC	4.2.4.10
Develop a robust and secure IT service delivery model to support business continuity and efficient operations.	Monitor and analyse ICT logged issues and trends since creation of dedicated ICT/Solutions team to establish baselines for service delivery.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	DISR	4.2.4.11

Business Plan 2023



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Priority 4

Empower our people and deliver effective operations

Goal 4.2 (Continued)

Develop the AAI's organisation structure, its processes, and technology to enable the delivery of the Strategic Plan.

Objective 4.2.4 (continued): Optimise processes and operations to ensure high quality provision of all services to the public.					
Actions	KPI	Start date	End date	Owner	Strategic Plan ref.
Implement relevant recommendations from review of data security completed in 2022.	All relevant recommendations from security review implemented.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	DISR	BP23 4.5
Design and roll-out of an effective time and attendance system for the organisation.	New system rolled out.	Q2 2023	Q4 2023	HHR/SD	BP23 4.6
Complete an audit of HR and Payroll, including the following activities: 1. Review AAI's HR policies and procedures in line with key employment legislation. 2. Assess whether adequate procedures are in place for payroll, travel and allowances. 3. Check for compliance with relevant guidelines, circulars, regulations and approved policies and procedures.	Audit complete.	Q2 2023	Q3 2023	HHR/SD	BP23 4.7
Complete office refurbishment to house the expanded AAI workforce.	Office refurbishment complete.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	HOC/CEO	BP23 4.8
Complete fit out of secondary information source records storage.	Fit out complete.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	DISR/CEO	BP23 4.9
Roll out a standard audit tool to review assessments.	All assessments being reviewed using standard format.	Q1 2023	Q3 2023	PSW	BP23 4.10

Business Plan 2023



5

Priority 5

Attain robust governance and supportive stakeholder relationships

Goal 5.1

Develop effective and accountable governance, risk management and compliance arrangements.

Objective 5.1.1: Ensure a robust and effective governance framework continues to be utilised and any refinements that are required are implemented. This will ensure that high quality leadership, governance and management teams remain in place and that the AAI continues to be compliant with the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies.

Actions	KPI	Start date	End date	Owner	Strategic Plan ref.
Review list of recommendations derived from the 2020 external Board Effectiveness Review (September 2020) and implement the recommendations.	Compile and implement list of recommendations.	Q1 2023	Q2 2023	DOO/Board	5.1.1.1
Continue to perform Board activities and maintain the effectiveness of the AAI Board in its operational and governance capacity.	Required financial and governance deadlines met.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	Board	5.1.1.5
Maintain a register noting the assessment of AAI's strategic goals, policies and activities in line with the Irish Human Rights and Equality Act 2014, and report on developments and achievements in this area in the AAI's Annual Report.	Review of register completed and updated on a quarterly basis.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	SMT	5.1.1.6
Create and populate a central policy register.	Register created.	Q2 2023	Q4 2023	SMT	BP23 5.1
Prepare for periodic critical review.	Review scoped and completed.	Q3 2023	Q4 2023	CEO/SMT	BP23 5.2

Business Plan 2023



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Priority 5

Attain robust governance and supportive stakeholder relationships

Goal 5.1 (continued)

Develop effective and accountable governance, risk management and compliance arrangements.

Objective 5.1.2: Exercise robust risk management, data management and integrity, and GDPR compliance processes.					
Actions	KPI	Start date	End date	Owner	Strategic Plan ref.
Identify and embed improvements from internal audit findings.	Improvements identified are fully embedded.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	SMT	5.1.2.2
Maintain and review on a half yearly basis the current Risk Governance Plan.	Review completed and updates made.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	HOC	5.1.2.3
Complete a compliance assessment to ensure GDPR requirements are currently met and any amendments that need to be made to ensure compliance (Access, Identify and Protect).	Conduct Data Protection Audit.	Q3 2023	Q4 2023	DISR/DPO	5.1.2.5
Review, enhance and strengthen the digital security across all of AAI's activities and systems.	Implement relevant digital security review recommendations.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	DISR/SMT	5.1.2.7
Review and update of Record of Processing Activities (ROPA) in light of experience with implementation of Birth Information and Tracing Act 2022.	Update of activities complete.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	DISR	BP23 5.3
Draft Records Retention Schedule (RRS) for the AAI.	Approved RRS in place.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	DISR	BP23 5.4

Business Plan 2023



5

Priority 5

Attain robust governance and supportive stakeholder relationships

Goal 5.2

Progress strong working relationships and collaboration with adoption stakeholders.

Objective 5.2.1: Maintain consistent and meaningful engagement with the Department to inform and cultivate support for the work of the AAI.

Actions	KPI	Start date	End date	Owner	Strategic Plan ref.
Establish regular schedule to support and provide advice to the Department and Minister on all adoption matters.	Annual meeting schedule completed and agreed between the DCEDIY, The Minister and the AAI.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	CEO/SMT	5.2.1.1
Develop, maintain and circulate meeting agendas, outcomes and issues log for each meeting held with the Department and its representatives.	Agenda, outcomes and issues log circulated ahead of each meeting.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	CEO	5.2.1.2
Ensure all required reports are completed and provided to the Department as per agreements.	Number of reports completed within the Service Level Agreements (SLAs) as a percentage of total reports required for submission to the department.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	HOC/SMT	5.2.1.3
Engage with the Department in relation to work on the whole of Government commitment to establish a National Centre for Research and Remembrance (NCRR) (action 7 of the Action Plan for Survivors and Former Residents of Mother and Baby and County Home Institutions).	DISR participation in the Archives Sub-Group of the NCRR Steering Group. CEO participation in the NCRR Steering Group.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	CEO/DISR	5.2.1.4
Participate in the DCEDIY-Tusla-AAI Performance Monitoring Group for the Birth Information and Tracing Act.	DISR participation in Performance Monitoring Group.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	DISR	BP23 5.5
Participate in the DCEDIY-Tusla-AAI working group on DNA.	DISR participation in working group.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	DISR	BP23 5.6

Business Plan 2023



5

Priority 5

Attain robust governance and supportive stakeholder relationships

Goal 5.2 (continued)

Progress strong working relationships and collaboration with adoption stakeholders.

Objective 5.2.2: Increase collaboration with Tusla and other service providers to create more streamlined and user-friendly adoption processes.					
Actions	KPI	Start date	End date	Owner	Strategic Plan ref.
Review and redefine the expected roles and responsibilities for Tusla and the AAI.	Roles and responsibilities defined and shared/approved by the Department.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	CEO/PSW	5.2.2.1
Implement the revised set of roles and responsibilities via the responsible government department.	AAI's and Tusla agreed roles and responsibilities are operationalised through the government department.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	CEO/PSW	5.2.2.2
Establish a regular schedule of meetings with representatives of Tusla and other service providers with a goal of identifying and remedying cross-organisational areas for development.	Annual meeting schedules established and signed off by Tusla/other service providers.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	CEO/PSW	5.2.2.3
Develop, maintain and circulate meeting agendas, outcomes and issues log for each meeting held with Tusla and other service providers.	Agenda, outcomes and issues log circulated.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	CEO/PSW	5.2.2.4
Work with Tusla and other service providers to lead a review of cross-organisational processes and communications in order to streamline and improve effectiveness with the ultimate goal of improving the end-to-end adoption process.	Review completed. Areas for improvement identified and changes made accordingly (contingent on 5.2.2.2).	Q4 2023	Q4 2023	CEO/PSW	5.2.2.5
Contact Preference Register Operation.	Track and monitor implementation of AAI-Tusla BITA communications protocol.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	DISR	BP23 5.7

Business Plan 2023



5

Priority 5

Attain robust governance and supportive stakeholder relationships

Goal 5.3

Improve awareness and understanding of the adoption process among stakeholders and the wider public.

Objective 5.3.1: Develop a coordinated public relations and communications strategy to ensure the right messages are released, through the right channels and to the right stakeholders.

Actions	KPI	Start date	End date	Owner	Strategic Plan ref.
Create a robust and structured internal communications protocol.	Plan developed, approved and rolled out to all staff.	Q3 2023	Q4 2023	CEO	5.3.1.2
Provide regular communication briefings to key stakeholders on new and relevant adoption matters.	Number of briefings to be held.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	CEO/SMT	5.3.1.3
Examine Social Media Communications opportunities.	Opportunities identified.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	SMT	5.3.1.5
Conduct a full content review of AAI websites in advance of a complete redesign in 2024.	Content review complete.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	HOC	BP23 5.8

Business Plan 2023



5

Priority 5

Attain robust governance and supportive stakeholder relationships

Goal 5.3 (continued)

Improve awareness and understanding of the adoption process among stakeholders and the wider public.

Objective 5.3.2: Articulate and promote adoption research findings, analysis, and informed debate on adoption issues.					
Actions	KPI	Start date	End date	Owner	Strategic Plan ref.
Work with adoption stakeholders to enhance awareness of adoption matters.	Include awareness updates as part of stakeholder briefings and meetings.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	SMT/Board	5.3.2.1
Develop and strengthen links with international networks to facilitate the transfer of good practice and knowledge sharing.	Identify networks to develop and expand. Implement any lessons learned from these relationships.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	CEO/Board	5.3.2.2
Produce public-friendly content developed from research findings and developments in the adoption sector.	Number of public-friendly content published as a % of total number of research studies completed.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	CEO/RO	5.3.2.4
Ensure that relevant parties in government and industry are kept informed of research findings and the location of such material within the AAI.	List of research studies conducted and published.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	CEO/RO	5.3.2.5
Identify and participate in national and international forums, workshops, seminars and conferences in collaboration with a range of stakeholders to share research findings and updates in adoption policies and practices.	Compile list of events to attend and contribute to. Attend events and capture any learnings to benefit AAI.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	SMT/RO/ Unit Managers	5.3.2.6
Implement national archives legislation obligations.	Approval of protocols, procedures and templates for archival description and public access to historical archives.	Q1 2023	Q2 2023	DISR	BP23 5.9

Business Plan 2023



6

Priority 6
Foster a culture of innovation

Goal 6.1

Build and maintain innovative methods to ensure that the adoption services provided by the AAI, and those agencies accredited by the AAI, are of world-class standard.

Objective 6.1.1: Develop and implement an organisational Innovation Strategy.					
Actions	KPI	Start date	End date	Owner	Strategic Plan ref.
Develop an Innovation Strategy and road map for implementation.	Strategy completed and published internally.	Q1 2023	Q2 2023	CEO/SMT	6.1.1.1
Continue to develop and implement a paperless working environment with relevant policies and procedures.	Relevant policies and procedures in place.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	DISR	6.1.1.2
Continue to digitise historic adoption records.	Ongoing digitisation project continuing to deliver to a high standard and at full processing capacity.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	DISR	6.1.1.3

Business Plan 2023



6

Priority 6
Foster a culture of innovation

Goal 6.1 (continued)

Build and maintain innovative methods to ensure that the adoption services provided by the AAI, and those agencies accredited by the AAI, are of world-class standard.

Objective 6.1.2: Empower and encourage the AAI's staff to challenge ways of working, generate ideas for improvement and implement innovative ideas to improve internal operations.

Actions	KPI	Start date	End date	Owner	Strategic Plan ref.
Define initiatives/forums to empower staff to contribute with innovative ideas and suggestions for improvement.	Initiatives/forums identified and communicated to staff and staff contributing to ideas.	Q1 2023	Q1 2023	DISR	6.1.2.1
Enhance staff awareness and understanding of the Our Public Service (OPS) 2020 framework.	Increased awareness and engagement with Innovation Network events and initiatives.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	SMT	6.1.2.3
Define current staff digital literacy skills and Identify developments needed to enhance AAI's delivery of services.	Digital literacy skills assessed, gaps identified and plan created to support staff development.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	HHR/SD	6.1.2.4
Establish regular knowledge sharing sessions to harness first-hand experience of customer facing staff to identify areas for improvement.	Knowledge sharing established as part of all team's planning sessions. Opportunities available for training in design thinking.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	SMT	6.1.2.5

Business Plan 2023



6

Priority 6
Foster a culture of innovation

Goal 6.1 (continued)

Build and maintain innovative methods to ensure that the adoption services provided by the AAI, and those agencies accredited by the AAI, are of world-class standard.

Objective 6.1.3: Use innovative methods, approaches and technologies to improve user experience, especially for adoptees, vulnerable users and users with disabilities.

Actions	KPI	Start date	End date	Owner	Strategic Plan ref.
Review and develop the accessibility of user-platforms and the availability of digital content and services to the public.	Review AAI websites to ensure accessibility.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	HOC	6.1.3.1
Further develop the AAI's website content to ensure stakeholder expectations are met.	Website reviewed and updated quarterly.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	HOC/CS Manager	6.1.3.3
Regularly review all client interactions to ensure activities are consistent with our customer charter fundamentals.	Bi-annual feedback exercise completed and changes implemented.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	SMT/Board	6.1.3.4
Design and roll-out internal initiative encouraging a digital data-centric approach to work within the AAI.	Monitor use of printing; monitor and update staff on digitisation progress; introduce and enforce use of ICT ticket system for requests/issues/permissions; and specify in records retention schedule the authoritative version record, e.g. digital or hardcopy.	Q1 2023	Q4 2023	DISR	6.1.3.5

Business Plan 2023



6

Priority 6
Foster a culture of innovation

Goal 6.2

Extend and develop capacity of Research Unit to enable the AAI to show clear research leadership in its field.

Objective 6.2.1: Progress and allocate appropriate staffing levels to ensure the continued development of the Research Unit.					
Actions	KPI	Start date	End date	Owner	Strategic Plan ref.
Review existing research operations to map the current body of work completed.	Review completed and research items completed and documented.	Q4 2023	Q4 2023	RO	6.2.1.1
Commence implementation of studies on new Research Strategy 2023-2026.	Studies commenced. Individual projects mapped out and key timelines identified.	Q1 2023	Q2 2023	RO	6.2.1.2
Identify research staff requirements and necessary skills and capabilities to meet future requirements. (linked to actions 4.2.1.2 and 4.2.1.3).	Review complete. Skills and capabilities re-defined. Training plans developed.	Q2 2023	Q4 2023	HHR/SD/RO	6.2.1.3
Conduct benchmark analysis of similar research units nationally and internationally in order to gain learnings and inform the further development of the Research Unit.	List of organisations identified, benchmarking exercise complete and feedback compiled for review and actioning.	Q1 2023	Q2 2023	CEO/RO	6.2.1.5

Business Plan 2023



6

Priority 6
Foster a culture of innovation

Goal 6.2 (continued)

Extend and develop capacity of Research Unit to enable the AAI to show clear research leadership in its field.

Objective 6.2.2: Identify additional progressive research areas in order to inform and influence national and international adoption.

Actions	KPI	Start date	End date	Owner	Strategic Plan ref.
Facilitate working groups and consultations with members of the AAI executive, Board and key stakeholders to identify areas of interest to outline potential topics for future research.	Working groups and consultations scheduled and completed.	Q2 2023	Q4 2023	RO	6.2.2.2
Engage with established research units, and/or third level education organisations to develop cross-organisational research projects.	New cross-organisation relationships established and regular collaboration sessions scheduled.	Q2 2023	Q4 2024	RO	6.2.2.3



Implementation Roadmap

Implementation Roadmap



1

Priority 1

The child is the foremost priority and their best interests should be pursued in all adoption cases

Goal 1.1

The primary goal of all adoptions is that the best interests of the child/young person are heard throughout the adoption process and they are responded to in a timely and meaningful manner throughout.

		Q1 2023	Q2 2023	Q3 2023	Q4 2023
Objective		Actions			
1.1.1	Incorporate the views and interests of the child/young person in all stages of the adoption process, giving due weight having regard to the age and maturity of the child.	Action 1.1.1.1			
		Action 1.1.1.2			
1.1.2	Incorporate all requests from the child/young person to be heard as part of the adoption process.	Action 1.1.2.1			
1.1.3	Provide sufficient and appropriate information to enable the child/young person to make a free and informed decision regarding their adoption.		Action 1.1.3.1		
		Action 1.1.3.2			
					Action 1.1.3.3
1.1.4	Ensure consistency in practice when consulting with the child/young person.	Action 1.1.4.1			
1.1.5	Engage with the Department and Minister to support the process of ensuring that the child/young person's views are considered in all adoption proceedings.	Action 1.1.5.1			
		Action 1.1.5.2			

Implementation Roadmap



2

Priority 2

Achieve the highest standards of adoption services

Goal 2.1

Ensure that all relevant parties can exercise their right to be heard throughout the full adoption process and support legal aid applications where required for parents.

		Q1 2023	Q2 2023	Q3 2023	Q4 2023
Objective		Actions			
2.1.1	Ensure that all relevant parties are fully informed of their right to be heard in the adoption process.	Action 2.1.1.1			
		Action 2.1.1.3			
2.1.2	Facilitate all relevant parties in their right to be heard during the adoption process.	Action 2.1.2.1			
2.1.3	Ensure the AAI provides sufficient and appropriate information to enable relevant parties to make a free and informed decision regarding adoption.	Action 2.1.3.1			
			Action 2.1.3.2		
					Action 2.1.3.3

Implementation Roadmap



2

Priority 2

Achieve the highest standards of adoption services

Goal 2.2

Achieve the highest standard in the regulation and operation of the adoption services provided directly by the AAI or by those agencies accredited by the AAI.

		Q1 2023	Q2 2023	Q3 2023	Q4 2023
Objective		Actions			
2.2.1	Support and oversee the development of comprehensive, high quality and integrated adoption services, including collaboration with all relevant stakeholders.			Action 2.2.1.1	
2.2.2	Maintain active oversight of all accredited agencies, including the re-accreditation and registration against approved regulations.	Action 2.2.2.1			
		Action 2.2.2.2			
2.2.3	Maintain all statutory and non-statutory registers.	Action 2.2.3.1			
		Action 2.2.3.2			
2.2.4	Make informed and timely decisions in all stages of the AAI's service processes.	Action 2.2.4.1			
		Action 2.2.4.2			
		Action 2.2.4.3			
		Action 2.2.4.4			
		Action 2.2.4.5			
		Action 2.2.4.6			

Implementation Roadmap



3

Priority 3
Effectively implement legislation.

Goal 3.1

Ensure that the Birth Information and Tracing Act continues to be operationalised.

		Q1 2023	Q2 2023	Q3 2023	Q4 2023
Objective		Actions			
3.1.2	Operationalise the Birth Information and Tracing Act, tracking metrics and KPIs to ensure effectiveness and consistency.	Action BP23 3.1			
		Action BP23 3.2			
		Action BP23 3.3			
		Action BP23 3.4			

Goal 3.2

Develop an organisation that is ready to adapt quickly to changes in legislation.

		Q1 2023	Q2 2023	Q3 2023	Q4 2023
Objective		Actions			
3.2.1	Work with the Government and policy makers to ensure that the AAI's commentary is considered in decision-making processes for the development of adoption related policy and legislation.	Action 3.2.1.1			
		Action 3.2.1.2			
3.2.2	Develop a plan to respond to the implementation of possible Donor-Assisted Human Reproduction and Surrogacy legislation, and additional relevant legislation which may impact the remit of the AAI and its services and operations.				Action 3.2.2.1

Implementation Roadmap



4

Priority 4

Empower our people and deliver effective operations

Goal 4.1

Build and maintain a workforce that has the capability, capacity and adaptability to achieve their career ambitions, and meet the changing needs of the adoption landscape.

		Q1 2023	Q2 2023	Q3 2023	Q4 2023
Objective		Actions			
4.1.1	Offer training and development opportunities to staff in a way that is readily available and fair, to allow them to achieve their career ambitions and align their work to support the implementation of the AAI's Strategic Plan.			Action 4.1.1.1	
			Action 4.1.1.3		
		Action 4.1.1.4			
4.1.2	Implement a robust staff retention, development and succession programme to ensure continuity of services, knowledge retention and organisation development.			Action 4.1.2.1	
		Action 4.1.2.4			
4.1.3	Create an environment in which staff can grow and contribute to the success of the AAI.			Action 4.1.3.3	

Implementation Roadmap



4

Priority 4

Empower our people and deliver effective operations

Goal 4.2

Develop and expand the AAI's organisation structure, its processes, and technology to enable the delivery of the Strategic Plan.

		Q1 2023	Q2 2023	Q3 2023	Q4 2023
Objective		Actions			
4.2.1	Ensure that all of the AAI functions have the support, capacity and skills required to perform their duties to the highest standard.		Action BP23 4.1		
			Action BP23 4.2		
		Action BP23 4.3			
		Action BP23 4.4			
4.2.3	Re-establish roles and responsibilities of functions and improve work allocation across the organisation to improve the efficiency of workflow and improve productivity.				
		Action 4.2.3.3			

Implementation Roadmap



4

Priority 4

Empower our people and deliver effective operations

Goal 4.2

Develop and expand the AAI's organisation structure, its processes, and technology to enable the delivery of the Strategic Plan.

		Q1 2023	Q2 2023	Q3 2023	Q4 2023
Objective		Actions			
4.2.4	Optimise processes and operations to ensure high quality provision of all services to the public.	Action 4.2.4.3			
		Action 4.2.4.4			
		Action 4.2.4.5			
		Action 4.2.4.6			
		Action 4.2.4.8			
		Action 4.2.4.9			
		Action 4.2.4.10			
		Action 4.2.4.11			
		Action BP23 4.5			
		Action BP23 4.6			
		Action BP23 4.7			
		Action BP23 4.8			
		Action BP23 4.9			
		Action BP23 4.10			

Implementation Roadmap



5

Priority 5

Attain robust governance and supportive stakeholder relationships

Goal 5.1

Develop effective and accountable governance, risk management and compliance arrangements.

		Q1 2023	Q2 2023	Q3 2023	Q4 2023
Objective		Actions			
5.1.1	Ensure a robust and effective governance framework continues to be utilised and any refinements that are required are implemented. This will ensure that high quality leadership, governance and management teams remain in place and that the AAI continues to be compliant with the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies.	Action 5.1.1.1			
		Action 5.1.1.5			
		Action 5.1.1.6			
			Action BP23 5.1		
				Action BP23 5.2	
5.1.2	Exercise robust risk management, data management and integrity, and GDPR compliance processes.	Action 5.1.2.2			
		Action 5.1.2.3			
				Action 5.1.2.5	
		Action 5.1.2.7			
		Action BP23 5.3			
		Action BP23 5.4			

Implementation Roadmap



5

Priority 5

Attain robust governance and supportive stakeholder relationships

Goal 5.2

Progress strong working relationships and collaboration with adoption stakeholders.

		Q1 2023	Q2 2023	Q3 2023	Q4 2023
Objective		Actions			
5.2.1	Maintain consistent and meaningful engagement with the Department to inform and cultivate support for the work of the AAI.	Action 5.2.1.1			
		Action 5.2.1.2			
		Action 5.2.1.3			
		Action 5.2.1.4			
		Action BP23 5.5			
		Action BP23 5.6			
5.2.2	Increase collaboration with Tusla and other service providers to create more streamlined and user friendly adoption processes.	Action 5.2.2.1			
		Action 5.2.2.2			
		Action 5.2.2.3			
		Action 5.2.2.4			
					Action 5.2.2.5
		Action BP23 5.7			

Implementation Roadmap



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Priority 5

Attain robust governance and supportive stakeholder relationships

Goal 5.3

Improve awareness and understanding of the adoption process among stakeholders and the wider public.

		Q1 2023	Q2 2023	Q3 2023	Q4 2023
Objective		Actions			
5.3.1	Develop a coordinated public relations and communications strategy to ensure the right messages are released, through the right channels and to the right stakeholders.			Action 5.3.1.2	
		Action 5.3.1.3			
		Action 5.3.1.5			
		Action BP23 5.8			
5.3.2	Articulate and promote adoption research findings, analysis, and informed debate on adoption issues.	Action 5.3.2.1			
		Action 5.3.2.2			
		Action 5.3.2.4			
		Action 5.3.2.5			
		Action 5.3.2.6			
		Action BP23 5.9			

Implementation Roadmap



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Priority 6
Foster a culture of innovation

Goal 6.1

Build and maintain innovative methods to ensure that the adoption services provided by the AAI, and those agencies accredited by the AAI, are of world-class standard.

		Q1 2023	Q2 2023	Q3 2023	Q4 2023
Objective		Actions			
6.1.1	Develop and implement an organisational Innovation Strategy.	Action 6.1.1.1			
		Action 6.1.1.2			
		Action 6.1.1.3			
6.1.2	Empower and encourage the AAI's staff to challenge ways of working, generate ideas for improvement and implement innovative ideas to improve internal operations.	Action 6.1.2.1			
		Action 6.1.2.3			
		Action 6.1.2.4			
		Action 6.1.2.5			
6.1.3	Use innovative methods, approaches and technologies to improve user experience, especially for adoptees, vulnerable users and users with disabilities.	Action 6.1.3.1			
		Action 6.1.3.3			
		Action 6.1.3.4			
		Action 6.1.3.5			

Implementation Roadmap



6

Priority 6
Foster a culture of innovation

Goal 6.2

Extend and develop capacity of Research Unit to enable the AAI to show clear research leadership in its field.

		Q1 2023	Q2 2023	Q3 2023	Q4 2023
Objective		Actions			
6.2.1	Progress and allocate appropriate staffing levels to ensure the continued development of the Research Unit.				Action 6.2.1.1
		Action 6.2.1.2			
			Action 6.2.1.3		
		Action 6.2.1.5			
6.2.2	Identify additional progressive research areas in order to inform and influence national and international adoption.				
			Action 6.2.2.2		
			Action 6.2.2.3		

Appendices



Appendix A: Acronyms

List of acronyms used throughout this document:

Acronym	
AAI	The Adoption Authority of Ireland
BITA	Birth Information and Tracing Act
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CS	Corporate Services
DA	Domestic Adoption
DCEDIY	Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth
DISR	Director of Information Services and Records
DOO	Director of Operations
DPO	Data Protection Officer
FAQ	Frequently Asked Question
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
HOC	Head of Compliance
HHR/SD	Head of Human Resources and Staff Development
ICA	Intercountry Adoption
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IT	Information and Tracing
PSW	Principal Social Worker
RO	Research Officer
RRS	Records Retention Schedule
RSC	Research Subcommittee
SMT	Senior Management Team
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
Tusla	Child and Family Agency