



ÚDARÁS UCHTÁLA na hÉIREANN
THE ADOPTION AUTHORITY of IRELAND

Adoption Authority of Ireland Business Plan 2024

Adoption Authority of Ireland



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Foreword

Foreword

The Adoption Authority of Ireland (AAI) is pleased to present the 2024 Business Plan. The Business Plan for 2024 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.

The 2024 Business Plan continues some of the work the AAI already had underway in 2023. The ability of the AAI to continue to complete all adoption orders in a timely and efficient manner remains a key objective for 2024. Similarly, the continued implementation of the Birth Information and Tracing Act 2022 features strongly in this year's plans.

A key priority for 2024 will be to continue to support our dedicated workforce through a comprehensive training needs assessment and relevant upskilling.

Building on already strong stakeholder relationships will be a key focus for 2024.

This is the final year of the AAI's current Strategic Plan 2022-2024 and will be a year of reflection, while also setting a course for the next three years.

The AAI 2024 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



Dr Lorraine Horgan
Chief Executive
Officer,
Adoption Authority of
Ireland



About this Plan

About this Plan

The 2024 Business Plan has been developed with having regard to the 2022-2024 Strategic Plan. It outlines all actions to be completed by the AAI during 2024 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 2024 Business Plan take account of the priorities agreed during the annual budgetary process. The resource plan for 2024 accounts for an AAI workforce of 60 members of staff.

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 2023 and Business Plan 2024

Overview of activities conducted in 2023.

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 2024.



AAI Overview

AAI Overview

Adoption Authority of Ireland (AAI): Formation and Purpose

The Adoption Authority of Ireland, established on 1 November 2010 under the Adoption Act 2010, is an independent quasi-judicial body under the aegis of the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY). The Authority 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 in Ireland. The purpose of the Adoption Act 2010 is to improve standards in both domestic and intercountry adoption.

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 Authority under the current 2010 legislation, which repealed the Adoption Acts from 1952 to 1998.

The 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 provided 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 or the subject of an illegal birth registration, or who otherwise have questions in relation to their origins. It also allowed for access to information by next of kin in certain circumstances.

The new law also established the Contact Preference Register (CPR) 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 mandated the safeguarding of adoption records by the Authority.

AAI Overview

Areas of Work

The Authority's obligations span the following areas:

Domestic Adoption: Domestic adoption refers to the situation where a child who is resident in Ireland is adopted by a person or couple who is/are also resident in Ireland. The nature and effect of an Irish adoption order is that the child becomes the child of the adopter(s) as if born to them, with all the rights and duties of parent(s) and children in relation to each other. Irish adoption legislation only allows for the adoption of a child. A child is defined as a person who has not yet reached 18 years of age. There are four different types of domestic adoption – stepfamily, extended family/relative adoption, domestic infant adoption and long-term foster care to adoption.

Intercountry Adoption: Intercountry adoption refers to the situation where persons resident in Ireland decide to adopt a child who is resident in a country other than Ireland. Intercountry adoption was given a statutory basis in 1991 with the passing of the Adoption Act in that year. Persons who complete an adoption outside of the State may apply to the Authority to have that adoption recognised and an entry made in the Register of Intercountry Adoptions (RICA). The Authority also maintains the Gender Recognition Register for the purpose of registering a gender recognition of intercountry adoptions.

Information Services: The Information Services and Records Unit assists with post-adoption information and services such as access to records. The BITA was passed in July 2022, allowing access to birth, care and early life, medical information, information relating to illegal birth registrations, as well as the option to apply for tracing services, placing the CPR on a statutory basis. This unit is also responsible for data protection, Freedom of Information (FOI), digital ICT and historical Archives that fall under the National Archives Act 1986–2018.

Social Work: Social workers in the Adoption Authority understand that adoption is a lifelong process that can generate a mix of emotions and needs for parties involved. It is the responsibility of the social work service in the Adoption Authority to provide a statutory tracing service for our clients. Further to this work, social workers also provide mediation, brief intervention and support and complete reviews of all current proposed adoptions.

Accreditation: In the context of adoption, accreditation means the formal evaluation by the Adoption Authority of Ireland of certain bodies or persons, specifically bodies or persons who are involved in making arrangements for the adoption of a child or the provision of services such as tracing, counselling or mediation for adopted persons or relatives of adopted persons.

Research: As part of its statutory function, the Authority is required to undertake or assist in research projects and activities relating to adoption services. The Authority is committed to informing adoption policy and service delivery through development of a comprehensive information, research and communications framework.

Adoption Authority of Ireland's Customer Charter

The Adoption Authority of Ireland is committed to providing 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 Authority 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 Authority'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”

- Adoption Authority of Ireland 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”

- Adoption Authority of Ireland Vision



Principles and Values

In addition, 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 throughout the adoption process with consideration of their lifelong needs. Ensuring that the Authority is committed to hearing from children and young people and responding meaningfully in the adoption process.
- **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).
- **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.
- **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 to listen to and respect staff ensuring the Authority remains a good place to work.

A close-up photograph of several people in business attire (white shirts and a blue tie) gathered around a table. Their hands are focused on signing a document. One person is using a blue pen to sign, while others have their hands resting on the paper. A watch is visible on one of the wrists. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting an office environment. A semi-transparent blue horizontal bar is overlaid across the middle of the image, containing the text 'Review of 2023'.

Review of 2023

Review of 2023

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 2023 were derived from the Strategic Plan, while several other unplanned activities also took place throughout the year. During 2023 the AAI continued to deliver on our commitment to provide excellent adoption services to the public at all times.

BITA and CPR

In July and October, the AAI marked the one-year anniversary of the implementation of BITA information release provisions, a tracing service and the creation of the CPR on a statutory footing. In respect of the tracing service, the AAI has received more tracing applications than at any time in its history and all of these have been allocated within six months of the date of receiving them.

Climate Action

As required under the Government's Public Sector Climate Action Mandate, the AAI developed its first Climate Action Roadmap in 2023, and implementation of initiatives identified therein are underway to advancing the Authority's responsibility and commitment to sustainable working. Training and awareness was the focus of the plan, with staff participating in training on energy management and carbon basics. Additionally, the Finance Officer completed the SEAI Public Sector training course in Internal Audit to support the organisation monitor the implementation of recommendations of the planned energy audit.

Continued Excellence in our Day-to-Day Delivery of Adoption Services and Compliance

Throughout 2023, 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 continued to work closely with the line department, as well as key stakeholders during 2023 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. Office renovation and refurbishment was completed to accommodate our growing workforce both comfortably and safely. The AAI procured the services of a Building Services Design Lead to support in the fit-out of secondary information storage for source records. Construction works for this fit out have commenced and are on track to conclude in 2024.

Research

We continued our focus to build our research capabilities through our Research Unit. The unit recruited a permanent Research Assistant in 2023 to support the delivery of key objectives and projects identified for delivery through the Research Strategy 2023-2026.

In addition to progressing our core research studies on domestic and intercountry adoption, in 2023 the research unit focused on increasing adoption awareness among key stakeholders. This included presenting research data to our line Department and delivering a workshop about adoption at the Psychological Society of Ireland's annual conference. The unit also developed a weekly research briefing, for all staff, updating them on the latest national and international adoption research. This ensures that the work of the executive is informed and underpinned with a strong evidence base.

Wellbeing

During 2023 the AAI ensured our staff were well supported through our Wellness Programme. A number of initiatives and events were rolled out during 2023 including yoga classes and talks from the Competition and Consumer Protection Commissions and the Irish Heart Foundation. In 2023 the AAI Social Committee was formed, who organised a number of after-work events. The AAI procured an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) provider through the OGP framework to support staff maintain and improve wellbeing in the workplace.

A photograph of a man and a young child. The man, on the left, is wearing a light-colored baseball cap and a plaid shirt. He is holding the child in his arms. The child, on the right, has light hair and is wearing a blue and brown shirt and light-colored pants. They are standing in front of a blue tractor. The background is slightly blurred, showing the tractor's cabin and some outdoor elements. A semi-transparent blue horizontal band is overlaid across the middle of the image, containing the text "Business Plan 2024".

Business Plan 2024

Business Plan 2024

Overview

The Business Plan for 2024 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 views 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 (as per the Strategic Plan) have been used in order to frame the delivery of the 2024 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 its strategic goals.

Of note, the AAI will be preparing its new three-year strategy for the period 2025-2027 this year allowing for an in-depth consideration of the organisational priorities and future direction over the coming years. In addition, as part of Periodic Critical Review (PCR) of the Authority to be conducted by DCEDIY, we will actively engage with the Department and participate in the PCR over the course of 2024. As provided for in the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies, the overarching objective of a PCR is primarily to focus on the ongoing business case for each entity, its performance and efficiency and effectiveness, as well as its governance arrangements.

In summary, the six key priorities driving the Business Plan for the AAI for 2024 and the key strategic goals are highlighted overleaf.



Business Plan 2024

Overview

Priorities	Goals		
 <p>1. The child is the foremost priority and their best interests should be pursued in all adoption cases.</p>	<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>		
 <p>2. Achieve the highest standards of adoption services.</p>	<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.</p>	<p>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>	
 <p>3. Effectively implement legislation.</p>	<p>3.1 Ensure that the BITA continues to be operationalised.</p>	<p>3.2 Develop an organisation that is ready to adapt quickly to changes in legislation.</p>	
 <p>4. Empower our people and deliver effective operations.</p>	<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.</p>	<p>4.2 Develop the AAI's organisation structure, its processes, and technology to enable the delivery of the Strategic Plan.</p>	
 <p>5. Attain robust governance and supportive stakeholder relationships.</p>	<p>5.1 Develop effective and accountable governance, risk management and compliance arrangements.</p>	<p>5.2 Progress strong working relationships and collaboration with adoption stakeholders.</p>	<p>5.3 Improve awareness and understanding of the adoption process among stakeholders and the wider public.</p>
 <p>6. Foster a culture of innovation.</p>	<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.</p>	<p>6.2 Extend and develop capacity of Research Unit to enable the AAI to show clear research leadership in its field.</p>	

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

Business Plan 2024



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 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 having been consulted by the time of the hearing.	Q1 2024	Q4 2024	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 2024	Q4 2024	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.	On each application such requests are fully responded to and documented.	Q1 2024	Q4 2024	DOO	1.1.2.1

Business Plan 2024



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 2024	Q4 2024	DOO	1.1.3.1
Develop and make readily available a set of frequently asked questions (FAQs) to guide interactions with a child/young person.	FAQs reviewed, updated and published on the AAI's website.	Q1 2024	Q3 2024	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 2024	Q4 2024	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.	Q4 2024	Q4 2024	DOO	1.1.4.1

Business Plan 2024



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.
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 2024	Q4 2024	DOO/Board	1.1.5.2

Business Plan 2024



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 2024	Q4 2024	Board/DOO	2.1.1.1
Ensure that guidance on provision of legal aid support for parents is advised in all adoption applications.	Legal Aid notification is captured in all adoption applications.	Q1 2024	Q4 2024	DOO	2.1.1.2
Develop protocol with DCEDIY and Legal Aid Board.	Protocol developed and implemented.	Q2 2024	Q4 2024	DOO	2.1.1.3

Business Plan 2024



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 2.1.2: 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 2024	Q4 2024	DOO	2.1.2.1
Review and re-implement a feedback mechanism (e.g. via an online form), develop a lessons learned document based on responses received and seek to implement revisions to processes and procedures based on appropriately agreed feedback.	Feedback process reviewed, redefined and reimplemented. Lessons learned document created and any required changes to process implemented.	Q1 2024	Q3 2024	DOO	2.1.2.2

Business Plan 2024



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.	Q2 2024	Q3 2024	DISR/DOO	2.1.3.1
Develop and make readily available a set of FAQs to guide interactions with all stakeholders (see Action 1.1.3.2 for FAQs regarding child/young persons) of the AAI.	FAQ document is completed and available on AAI's website.	Q2 2024	Q4 2024	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 2024	Q4 2024	DOO	2.1.3.3
Ensure that guidance on provision of legal aid support for parents is advised when relevant.	Legal Aid notification is captured in all adoption applications.	Q1 2024	Q4 2024	DOO	2.1.3.4

Business Plan 2024



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 Domestic and Intercountry adoption services in Ireland. This is an ongoing process which is actioned, reviewed, and updated on a regular basis.	Compliance review completed.	Q1 2024	Q1 2024	DOO	2.2.1.1
Engage with potential countries with a view to entering into a bi-lateral agreement for the purpose of facilitating intercountry adoptions.	Assessment completed and recommendations provided.	Q3 2024	Q4 2024	Board/CEO	2.2.1.2

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.
Complete re-accreditation and compliance processes as required. This is an ongoing process which is actioned, reviewed and updated on a regular basis.	Completion of re-accreditation process for all relevant bodies. Compliance reporting is reviewed by the Board monthly.	Q1 2024	Q4 2024	HOC	2.2.2.2
Inspections of Accredited Bodies.	Inspection framework in place and inspections completed, and outcomes that demonstrate ethical, transparent and value-for-money processes.	Q1 2024	Q4 2024	DOO	BP24 2.1

Business Plan 2024



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 2024	Q4 2024	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 2024	Q4 2024	SMT	2.2.3.2

Business Plan 2024



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.	Q3 2024	Q4 2024	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 2024	Q4 2024	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 2024	Q4 2024	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 2024	Q4 2024	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 2024	Q4 2024	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 2024	Q4 2024	DISR	2.2.4.6

Business Plan 2024



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 BITA.	Protocols, procedures and templates reviewed and in place.	Q1 2024	Q4 2024	DISR	BP23 3.1
Track and monitor information requests for relevant persons, qualifying persons; qualifying relatives; 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 2024	Q4 2024	DISR	BP23 3.2
Track and monitor number of applications; locations of applicants and types of contact preferences for adoptees and relatives on the CPR.	Success/match rate recorded for information requests.	Q1 2024	Q4 2024	DISR	BP23 3.3
Participate in the statutory review under Section 70 of the BITA legislation.	Participation in review as requested by DCEDIY.	Q3 2024	Q4 2024	DISR	BP23 3.4
Safeguarding of Records under Part 7 of BITA 2022.	Develop long-term strategy for the acquisition, retention and safeguarding of relevant records for approval by the AAI Board.	Q2 2024	Q4 2024	DISR	BP24 3.5

Business Plan 2024



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 2024	Q4 2024	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 2024	Q4 2024	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. Board to table a discussion in relation to future Donor-Assisted Human Reproduction and Surrogacy legislation.	Q1 2024	Q4 2024	RO/DOO	3.2.2.1
Develop high level implementation plans to address any immediate requirements from this research.	Requirements identified, and implementation plans created and agreed.	Q1 2024	Q4 2024	SMT/Board	3.2.2.2

Business Plan 2024



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.	Establish a skills and competency matrix for the AAI and identify and approve capability/training requirements.	Q1 2024	Q4 2024	HHR/SD	4.1.1.1
Conduct skills gap analysis between current capabilities against future capability requirements.	Complete a competency and skills gap analysis on current capabilities.	Q1 2024	Q4 2024	HHR/SD	4.1.1.2
Review existing staff learning and development (L&D) plan and design and implement future L&D plan.	Design and approve an L&D Framework and future development plan.	Q1 2024	Q4 2024	HHR/SD	4.1.1.3
Review and update staff handbook with updated L&D plans for all staff.	Staff handbook is updated with revised L&D plans.	Q1 2024	Q4 2024	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 plan model for key management and technical roles.	Implement succession plan model.	Q1 2024	Q4 2024	HHR/SD	4.1.2.1
Identify and map staff career growth plan.	Implement staff career growth plan.	Q1 2024	Q4 2024	HHR/SD	4.1.2.2
Develop as an immediate priority, a staff retention programme across the entire organisation.	Implement staff retention programme.	Q1 2024	Q4 2024	HHR/SD	4.1.2.3

Business Plan 2024



4

Priority 4
Empower our people and deliver effective operations

Goal 4.1 (Continued)

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 4.1.3: 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.
Develop an organisational People Strategy (focusing on organisational culture, reemphasis of mission, vision and values and staff enablement).	Publish Organisational People Strategy.	Q1 2024	Q4 2024	HHR/SD	4.1.3.1
Ensure the staff retention programme and People Strategy goals are outlined clearly in the staff handbook.	Staff Handbook is updated with Staff Retention and People Strategy.	Q4 2024	Q4 2024	HHR/SD	4.1.3.3
Ensure the People Strategy and staff handbook clearly identify and implement initiatives to nurture staff collaboration and engagement that all contribute to enhancing a positive working environment.	Staff initiatives clearly included in the People Strategy and staff handbook.	Q3 2024	Q4 2024	HHR/SD	4.1.3.4

Business Plan 2024



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.	Q1 2024	Q4 2024	HHR/SD	BP23 4.1
Collaborate with the Department for inputs into workforce planning and a people strategy.	Discussions with the Department complete.	Q1 2024	Q2 2024	HHR/SD	BP23 4.2
Continue to support staff through the wellness programme.	Wellness programme provisioned, reviewed and updated throughout 2024.	Q1 2024	Q4 2024	HHR/SD	BP23 4.4

Business Plan 2024



4

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 2024	Q4 2024	HOC	4.2.4.3
Complete a review of existing facilities following current works and determine their suitability for the AAI.	Review completed and future needs assessment.	Q1 2024	Q4 2024	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 2024	Q4 2024	HOC	4.2.4.5
Develop and promote the Sustainability and Energy Efficient Strategy.	Approve and implement 2024 Climate Action Roadmap.	Q1 2024	Q3 2024	HOC	4.2.4.6
Supervision of social work placements by the Social Work Team.	Number of student placements facilitated by social work team.	Q1 2024	Q4 2024	PSW	BP24 4.1

Business Plan 2024



4

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.
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 2024	Q4 2024	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 2024	Q4 2024	DISR	4.2.4.11
Identify the future organisational ICT requirements for effective delivery of the AAI's services.	Complete Future ICT Needs Analysis.	Q1 2024	Q4 2024	DISR	4.2.4.13

Business Plan 2024



4

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 2024	Q1 2024	DISR	BP23 4.5
Design and roll-out of an effective time and attendance system for the organisation.	New system rolled out.	Q2 2024	Q2 2024	HHR/SD	BP23 4.6
Complete fit out of secondary information source records storage.	Fit out complete.	Q1 2024	Q1 2024	DISR/HOC	BP23 4.9
Completion of fit out of ground floor storage area and moving of records.	Records housed securely on the ground floor of Shelbourne House.	Q1 2024	Q2 2024	DISR	BP24 4.2

Business Plan 2024



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.
Document future skills, roles and experience requirements for the Board in line with this strategy and the expected future roles of similar public sector boards.	Complete future skills assessment of Board.	Q1 2024	Q2 2024	CEO/Board	5.1.1.2
Commence planning for new Board appointments in 2025 as a priority. Investigate the option to stagger Board terms for each individual Board member.	Complete Board planning exercise.	Q1 2024	Q4 2024	CEO/Board	5.1.1.3
Continue Board Effectiveness Review when required.	Internal Board review completed (annually). External Board review completed (every 3 years).	Q1 2024	Q4 2024	Board/DOO	5.1.1.4
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 2024	Q4 2024	Board/DOO	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 2024	Q4 2024	SMT	5.1.1.6

Business Plan 2024



5

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.
Participate and engage in the Periodic Critical Review as conducted by the Department.	Review scoped and completed.	Q1 2024	Q4 2024	SMT	BP23 5.2
Identify and embed improvements from internal audit findings.	Improvements identified are fully embedded.	Q1 2024	Q4 2024	SMT	5.1.2.2
Maintain and review the risk governance framework regularly.	Review completed and updates made. Consideration by the Board of the Corporate Risk Register on a monthly basis. Oversight by the Risk and Audit Committee at its quarterly meetings.	Q1 2024	Q4 2024	HOC	5.1.2.3
Schedule regular GDPR governance assessments and audits and ensure that any failings/concerns are addressed and implemented (Govern and Audit).	All assessments scheduled and completed on time.	Q4 2024	Q4 2024	DISR/DPO	5.1.2.6
Review, enhance and strengthen the digital security across all of AAI's activities and systems.	Implement relevant digital security review recommendations.	Q1 2024	Q4 2024	DISR/SMT	5.1.2.7
Draft Records Retention Schedule (RRS) for the AAI.	Approved RRS in place.	Q1 2024	Q3 2024	DISR	BP23 5.4

Business Plan 2024



5

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.
Conduct external evaluation of the Board and Committees of the AAI.	Final report produced and key recommendations identified.	Q1 2024	Q3 2024	DOO	BP24 5.1

Business Plan 2024



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.
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 2024	Q4 2024	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 2024	Q4 2024	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.	Q1 2024	Q4 2024	CEO/DISR	5.2.1.4
Participate in the DCEDIY-Tusla-AAI Performance Monitoring Group for the BITA.	DISR participation in Performance Monitoring Group.	Q1 2024	Q4 2024	DISR	BP23 5.5
Participate in the DCEDIY-Tusla-AAI working group on DNA.	Participation in working group.	Q1 2024	Q1 2024	PSW	BP23 5.6

Business Plan 2024



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 2024	Q2 2024	CEO/PSW	5.2.2.1
Implement the revised set of roles and responsibilities via the responsible government department.	AAI and Tusla agreed roles and responsibilities are operationalised through the government department.	Q1 2024	Q2 2024	CEO/PSW	5.2.2.2
Establish a regular schedule of meetings with representatives of Tusla and other service providers to address potential issues arising.	Annual meeting schedules established and signed off by Tusla/other service providers.	Q1 2024	Q4 2024	CEO/PSW/DOO	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 2024	Q4 2024	CEO/PSW/DOO	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).	Q1 2024	Q4 2024	CEO/PSW/DOO	5.2.2.5
Contact Preference Register Operation.	Track and monitor implementation of AAI-Tusla BITA communications protocol.	Q3 2024	Q4 2024	DISR	BP23 5.7

Business Plan 2024



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.
Develop an organisational external communications strategy, including a well-defined public relations plan (linked to action 3.1.1.8).	External Communications and Public Relations strategy developed and signed off.	Q2 2024	Q4 2024	CEO/HOC	5.3.1.1
Create a robust and structured internal communications protocol.	Plan developed, approved and rolled out to all staff.	Q2 2024	Q4 2024	CEO/HOC	5.3.1.2
Provide regular communication briefings to key stakeholders on new and relevant adoption matters.	Number of briefings to be held.	Q2 2024	Q4 2024	SMT	5.3.1.3
Examine Social Media Communications opportunities.	Opportunities identified.	Q1 2024	Q4 2024	SMT	5.3.1.5
Design and integration of existing AAI website and birthinfo.ie	New fully integrated AAI website live incorporating existing birth info functionality.	Q1 2024	Q4 2024	HOC	BP24 5.2

Business Plan 2024



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 2024	Q4 2024	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 2024	Q4 2024	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 percentage of total number of research studies completed.	Q1 2024	Q4 2024	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, particularly where relevant to the Department's review of adoption legislation.	List of research studies conducted and published.	Q1 2024	Q4 2024	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, particularly where relevant to the Department's review of adoption legislation.	Q1 2024	Q4 2024	SMT/RO/ Unit Managers	5.3.2.6
Contribute to the Department's review of adoption legislation.	Contributions to review delivered as requested by the Department.	Q1 2024	Q4 2024	PSW/RO/DOO	BP24 5.3

Business Plan 2024



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.
Implement national archives legislation obligations.	(i) Approval of protocols, procedures and templates for archival description and public access to historical archives. (ii) Regular monitoring of activities under national archives legislation.	Q1 2024	Q4 2024	DISR	BP23 5.9

Business Plan 2024



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 2024	Q4 2024	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 2024	Q4 2024	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 2024	Q3 2024	DISR	6.1.1.3

Business Plan 2024



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.
Further develop the 'Innovation' section on the intranet to increase staff engagement and awareness.	Review staff intranet site, define changes needed and implement changes.	Q4 2024	Q4 2024	DISR	6.1.2.2
Enhance staff awareness and understanding of the Our Public Service (OPS) 2020 framework and the Public Service Transformation 2030 Strategy.	Increased awareness and engagement with Innovation Network events and initiatives.	Q1 2024	Q4 2024	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 2024	Q4 2024	HHR/SD/DISR	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 2024	Q4 2024	SMT	6.1.2.5

Business Plan 2024



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 2024	Q4 2024	HOC	6.1.3.1
Establish a forum for engagement with service users to gauge current user experiences.	Mapping our interactions with users underway e.g. use of empathy mapping and other innovative techniques.	Q1 2024	Q4 2024	SMT/Board	6.1.3.2
Further develop the AAI's website content to ensure stakeholder expectations are met.	Website reviewed and updated quarterly.	Q1 2024	Q4 2024	HOC	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 2024	Q4 2024	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 2024	Q4 2024	DISR	6.1.3.5

Business Plan 2024



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 include legal research in order to map the current body of work completed.	Review completed and research items completed and documented.	Q4 2024	Q4 2024	RO	6.2.1.1
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 2024	Q4 2024	HHR/SD/RO	6.2.1.3

Business Plan 2024



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.
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.	Q1 2024	Q4 2024	RO	6.2.2.3

A close-up photograph of a child's hands playing with toy cars on a wooden surface. The child's hands are positioned to move a yellow toy car with black wheels and a blue wheel. In the background, another blue toy car is visible. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue horizontal band containing the text "Implementation Roadmap".

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 2024	Q2 2024	Q3 2024	Q4 2024
	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 1.1.3.2	Action 1.1.3.1		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 1.1.5.2			

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 2024	Q2 2024	Q3 2024	Q4 2024
	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 2.1.1.2	
			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			
		Action 2.1.2.2			
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
		Action 2.1.3.4			

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 2024	Q2 2024	Q3 2024	Q4 2024
	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			
		Action 2.2.1.2			
2.2.2	Maintain active oversight of all accredited agencies, including the re-accreditation and registration against approved regulations.	Action 2.2.2.2			
		Action BP24 2.1			
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 2024	Q2 2024	Q3 2024	Q4 2024
Objective		Actions			
3.1.2	Operationalise the BITA, 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 2024	Q2 2024	Q3 2024	Q4 2024
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			
		Action 3.2.2.2			

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 2024	Q2 2024	Q3 2024	Q4 2024
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 4.1.1.2			
		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 4.1.2.2			
		Action 4.1.2.3			
4.1.3	Create an environment in which staff can grow and contribute to the success of the AAI.	Action 4.1.3.1			
		Action 4.1.3.3			
		Action 4.1.3.4			

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 2024	Q2 2024	Q3 2024	Q4 2024
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.	<div style="display: flex; flex-direction: column; gap: 5px;"> <div style="border: 2px solid #0056b3; padding: 2px;">Action BP23 4.1</div> <div style="border: 2px solid #0056b3; padding: 2px;">Action BP23 4.2</div> <div style="border: 2px solid #0056b3; padding: 2px;">Action BP23 4.4</div> </div>			

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 2024	Q2 2024	Q3 2024	Q4 2024	
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 BP24 4.1				
		Action 4.2.4.10				
		Action 4.2.4.11				
		Action 4.2.4.13				
		Action BP23 4.5				
				Action BP23 4.6		
		Action BP23 4.9				
		Action BP24 4.2				

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 2024	Q2 2024	Q3 2024	Q4 2024	
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 5.1.1.2				
		Action 5.1.1.3				
		Action 5.1.1.4				
		Action 5.1.1.5				
		Action 5.1.1.6				
		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 5.1.2.6
		Action 5.1.2.7				
		Action BP23 5.4				
		Action BP24 5.1				

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 2024	Q2 2024	Q3 2024	Q4 2024
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 5.2.1.2			
		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



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.

		Q1 2024	Q2 2024	Q3 2024	Q4 2024
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.				
5.3.2	Articulate and promote adoption research findings, analysis, and informed debate on adoption issues.				

Implementation Roadmap



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.

		Q1 2024	Q2 2024	Q3 2024	Q4 2024
	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 6.1.2.2 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 6.1.3.2 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 2024	Q2 2024	Q3 2024	Q4 2024
	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 6.2.1.3		
6.2.2	Identify additional progressive research areas in order to inform and influence national and international adoption.	Action 6.2.2.3			



Appendices

Appendix A: Acronyms

List of Acronyms used throughout this document:

Acronym	
AAI	Adoption Authority of Ireland
BITA	Birth and Information Tracing Act 2022
CPR	Contact Preference Register
DCEDIY	Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth
FAQs	Frequently Asked Questions
FOI	Freedom of Information
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
KPIs	Key Performance Indicators
SOPs	Standard Operating Procedures
Tusla	Child and Family Agency