

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF A KEY DECISION CABINET

ITEM:	WEST MERCIA ADOPTION SERVICE
Members Present:	Councillors: AW Johnson (Leader), H Bramer, J Millar, PM Morgan (Deputy Leader), GJ Powell, PD Price.
Date of Decision:	10 April 2014
Exempt:	No
Confidential	No
This is a key decision because It is likely to result in the Council incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the Council's budget for the service or function concerned. A threshold of £500,000 is regarded as significant.	
A notice was served in accordance with Part 3, Section 9 (Publicity in connection with key decisions) of The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.	
Urgency/Special Urgency: (As defined in Constitution)	No
Purpose:	To approve the future operating model for a West Mercia Adoption Service.
Decision:	THAT: (a) To approve the proposed future operating model for a West Mercia Adoption Partnership commencing first with Option 2, as outlined in appendix one, page 9; (b) To note the financial implications of this option; and (c) To delegate any future decision on the implementation of the operating model, including a preferred provider, to the Director of Children's Wellbeing in consultation with the Lead Cabinet Member.
Reasons for the Decision:	The overall aim of the project is to develop a single West Mercia Adoption Service which delivers a more efficient and effective service to a wider range of children, with particular emphasis on improving the timeliness of placing children and young people for adoption. The phased approach to establishing a West Mercia Adoption Partnership will enable all authorities to progress achieving appropriate economies of scale and quality improvements for adoptive families and the children currently in our care
Options Considered:	1 An Outline Business Case for the project was presented to Cabinet on 4th October 2013. This included the following delivery options for the new service:

	<p>2 Option 1: Do nothing and stay 'as is', with each service maintaining its existing service set up, using 3rd parties independently procured.</p> <p>3 Option 2: Deliver some key functions together and maintain delivery of other functions within individual authorities.</p> <p>4 Option 3: Deliver a core adoption service across West Mercia, with commissioned non-core services based on local needs.</p> <p>5 Option 4: Deliver a single adoption service, incorporating all core and non-core services, delivered by a lead West Mercia authority.</p> <p>6 Option 5: Contract out all core and non-core services (on a not for profit basis), e.g., by going into partnership with a voluntary organisation or establishing a staff mutual.</p> <p>7 Further analysis identified Options 2 & 3 to be very similar and a model mixing elements of both Options was developed as a new Option 2. The revised options are list below.</p> <p>8 Option 1: Do nothing and stay 'as is', with each service maintaining its existing service set up, using third parties independently procured.</p> <p>9 Option 2: Deliver some adoption functions within a single adoption service, hosted by a lead West Mercia authority, with some specific functions continuing to be delivered within the individual local authorities.</p> <p>10 Option 3: Deliver a single adoption service, incorporating all the adoption services, hosted by a lead West Mercia authority.</p> <p>11 Option 4: Contract out all adoption services (on a not for profit basis), e.g. by going into partnership with a voluntary organisation or establishing a staff mutual.</p> <p>12 Analysis of the four options determined that:</p> <p>13 The added benefits from Option 1 are negligible and would not achieve adequate cost and quality benefits as it does not sufficiently remove duplication and management costs within adoption teams.</p> <p>14 It is felt that there has been insufficient progress made to date in developing the business model to permit a single authority to assume host status. Also the market for potential service providers is not at this time sufficiently developed or prepared to take on the overall management of the service. The risks are therefore perceived to be too high at this juncture to progress immediately to Option 3 or 4.</p> <p>15 Option 2 will be feasible based on a cost/benefit analysis, be relatively low risk and provide a sound launchpad to progress to either Option 3 or 4 in the medium term.</p>
<p>Conflict of Interest ■ (See below):</p>	

Date the key decision is due to take effect:	16 April 2014
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COUNCILLOR AW JOHNSONDate: 10 April 2014 LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

- a record of any conflict of interest declared by any executive member who is consulted by the member which relates to the decision;

And

- in respect of any declared conflict of interest, a note of dispensation granted by the relevant local authority's head of paid service.