

Written statement of a non-key officer decision
Director for children's wellbeing

Title	Extension of regional residential childrens home framework agreement
Decision maker	Director for children's wellbeing
Date of decision	1 November 2017
Report exemption class	Open
Purpose	To approve the renewal of the contract for the West Midlands residential framework for a period of one year up to December 2018.
Decision	<p>That:</p> <p>Approval is given for Herefordshire to implement the contractual option to renew the West Midlands Residential Children's Home Framework agreement for 12 months to December 2018.</p>
Reason for the decision	<p>As set out in the report. Documents relating to this decision are available at</p> <p>http://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/mglIssueHistoryHome.aspx?IId=50022935</p>
Consultation	
Options considered	<p>Do nothing. As there will be no framework arrangements, Herefordshire will spot purchase residential children's home placements as and when required. Spot purchase arrangements are likely to be more expensive than pre-agreed framework rates, as has been demonstrated in the regional framework. There is likely to always be a need to spot purchase some placements in order to meet the specific needs of a child. From January 2015 up to March 2017, 45% of residential placements have been secured via the West Midlands framework agreement, although this currently stands at 29%. To convert all of these to spot purchase arrangements could create significant additional cost pressures.</p> <p>Commission a Herefordshire only framework agreement. This is not recommended as Herefordshire has relatively low purchasing powers in the residential children's market. It is more likely that lower costs can be achieved by working collaboratively with</p>

	<p>regional partners.</p> <p>Participate in a sub-regional residential children's home framework. All other West Midlands councils have agreed to renew the framework for 12 months; it would be difficult to identify potential partners to support this process.</p> <p>To commission residential beds on a block contract arrangement. This option is not recommended as it could result in funding places which are not required. It is unlikely one provider would be able to meet the needs of all our looked after children (LAC) who require residential placements, so alternative provision would have to be sourced on a spot purchase arrangement.</p> <p>For Herefordshire to operate an in-house residential children's home service. As there is a small cohort of young people who, due to their needs, require a residential placement, matching needs would be a considering factor. Some of the young people could not be placed together, so operating a small number of homes would not alleviate the need for agency residential placements. This operation would require significant investment in terms of time, resources and funding. Further work would be required to identify costings and ascertain whether this would be a viable option.</p>
Declarations of interest	
Call-in expiry date (decisions are not subject to call-in where special urgency provisions apply)	7 November 2017

Officer: Director for children's wellbeing (Chris Baird)	Date 1 November 2017
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