

Record of officer decision

Decision title:	Decision to join Adoption Central England (ACE)
Date of decision:	25 June 2019
Decision maker:	Director for Children and Families
Authority for delegated decision:	<p>Cabinet approved a decision on 28th February 2019 that:</p> <p>(a) Herefordshire adoption service joins Adoption Central England (ACE) regional adoption agency with effect from 1 July 2019; and</p> <p>(b) the Director for Children and Families be authorised to take all operational decisions necessary to complete the partnership and hosting legal agreements with ACE.</p> <p>https://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/mgIssueHistoryHome.aspx?IId=50028555&Opt=0</p>
Ward:	Countywide
Consultation:	Consultation completed as part of decision making by Cabinet with Lead Members, Scrutiny committee and Cabinet members.
Decision made:	Herefordshire Adoption service joins Adoption Central England with effect from 1 st July 2019 and the Partnership and Hosting agreement is agreed.
Reasons for decision:	<p>All Adoption agencies are required to become part of a regional adoption service by 2020.</p> <p>Herefordshire has evaluated the options and believes that joining ACE is likely to best meet the needs of Herefordshire children.</p>
Highlight any associated risks/finance/legal/equality considerations:	<p>Herefordshire will contribute pro rata funding of £495,047 for the year 2019/20 and £447,210 for the year 2020/21 subject to review of the funding arrangements by the ACE management board, of which Herefordshire will be a member.</p> <p>Legal view as included in the Cabinet report is that joining ACE “enables the council to retain its adoption functions whilst having the advantages that a regionalised approach to adoption work provides.”</p> <p>No concerns relating to equality have been identified. Joining ACE enables greater choice of adopters for children and will enable better matching of children.</p> <p>Assistant director for Safeguarding and Family Support will become a member of the ACE management board which will ensure oversight and appropriate challenge in relation to the quality of service.</p>
Details of any alternative options considered and rejected:	<p>Do nothing. All adoption agencies are required to join a regional adoption agency by 2020.</p> <p>Join an alternative adoption agency. ACE is assessed to be the most</p>

	suitable regional adoption agency for Herefordshire to join and have agreed that Herefordshire can join.
Details of any declarations of interest made:	If any officers or members involved or consulted in the decision-making have declared an interest you should include the declaration here.

Signed

Date: 25 June 2019