

Record of operational decision

UPDATED March 2020: Decisions in relation Covid-19 should be published on the same day as the decision or at the very latest 24 hrs later.

Decision title:	Adoption introductions during Covid-19
Date of decision:	16 June 2020
Decision maker:	Director for children and families
Authority for delegated decision:	Council constitution 3.7.9 all necessary decisions in the case of emergencies
Ward:	All Wards
Consultation:	Legal services, Dr Godwin, Public Health, ACE, Cabinet Member 5 June 2020
Decision made:	<p>To proceed with face to face introductions for adoption during the COVID 19 pandemic.</p> <p>This shall be reviewed on a regular basis and in line with Government guidance regarding the restrictions as a result of COVID 19.</p>
Reasons for decision:	<p>Children's Social care are working to minimise the potential for delay during the Covid-19 pandemic on progressing plans for children to be adopted.</p> <p>Work to family find and match children subject to a Placement Order with prospective adopters is continuing and once a match is approved by ADM we would wish to move children to their new family as soon as we can as long as it is safe to do so.</p> <p>The plan for introductions is subject to a comprehensive risk assessment that is completed considering the risks and vulnerabilities relating to all parties involved – children, foster carers and their household and adopters and their household.</p> <p>The introductions will only proceed if this risk assessment is approved by the Adoption ADM who is the Assistant Director for Safeguarding and Family Support.</p>
Highlight any associated risks/finance/legal/equality considerations:	Introducing members from separate households will have some element of risk but efforts will be made to ensure government guidance is followed during such a time. For example any holiday accommodation used will be either "deep cleaned" or left empty for 72 hours prior to use and that if both of these measures are taken that this would provide certainty that it was a safe environment.

	<p>Additional advice has been sought from colleagues in Public Health who have advised that the measures provide good control in relation to COVID-19:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deep cleaning and leaving the environment for 72 hours follow guidance - Self-isolation for 14 days before hand for both sides would reduce risk. Here we note that we would not expect children not to attend school during this time. - Risk assessing both families to identify any extremely vulnerable or vulnerable people beforehand. <p>They further advise that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The adoptive parents travelling to and from the Foster family home should walk, cycle or go by private car. - Adoptive parents should maintain a 2m distance from people not in the Air B&B household or in the Foster carer's household as per current guidance. - After the adoptive parents have returned home they should be reminded to maintain a 2m meter social distance from other people for 14 days (This is current guidance for everyone). This would include other members of the family that do not live in the adoptive parents household.
Details of any alternative options considered and rejected:	<p>The only alternative option is to delay introductions until after the current pandemic restrictions are lifted.</p> <p>The above alternative would cause a significant delay in permanency for children.</p>
Details of any declarations of interest made:	n/a

Signed

Date: 16 June 2020