

Written statement of a non-key decision
Cabinet member children and families

Title	Children's Social Care Out Of Hours Emergency Duty Service
Decision maker	Cabinet member children and families Information about cabinet, including the names and contact details of the cabinet members, can be found here: http://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=251
Date of decision	1 December 2022
Report exemption class	Open
Purpose	To consider and approve the recommendations to extend for a further three years our existing out of hours emergency duty service for children's social care.
Decision	That: to direct award a contract to Worcestershire Children First to deliver Herefordshire's children's social care out of hours emergency duty service for a period of 36 months, at a total contract value for the 3 years of £380,928, from 1 April 2023 up to 31 March 2026.
Reason for the decision	As set out in the report. Documents relating to this decision are available at http://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/mgIssueHistoryHome.aspx?Id=50043458
Options considered	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Herefordshire could try to deliver the function from within its own social care resources. This is not recommended. This would require children's social care to recruit additional social workers and/or change terms and conditions of current children's social workers to enable them to work the unsociable hours required to deliver an out of hours service. As of August 2022, children's social care have 21 full time equivalent (FTE) vacant social worker posts, with a further 19 FTE posts filled with agency staff. Therefore, there is a significant risk of being unable to fill the additional vacancies arising from delivering the service in house. Worcestershire Council Emergency Duty Team service has successfully provided out of hours emergency cover for Herefordshire since April 1998 when the two local authorities became individual authorities and has

	<p>demonstrated efficient and effective delivery since.</p> <p>2. Competitive tender of the service to appoint an external provider. This is not recommended. In August 2022, we asked the Children’s Services Commissioning and Procurement Group for Local Authority commissioners and procurement professionals how their EDT services are delivered to understand how other authorities deliver their EDTs. Responses received suggest EDT services in other areas have only been externalised as part of wider externalisation of children’s social care services therefore, this suggests there is not a market for the EDT service externally.</p> <p>3. Herefordshire Council could delegate the function (under S101(b) of the Local Government Act 1972) to Worcestershire County Council, in order for Worcestershire County Council to commission Worcestershire Children First to deliver the service under a third party arrangement. This is not recommended. Although this would negate the need for us to commission Worcestershire Children’s first directly it is not recommended as it would result in the Council having less control over the service with limited opportunity to shape provision of what is a business critical service</p>
Declarations of interest (see below)	
Call-in expiry date (decisions are not subject to call-in where special urgency provisions apply)	7 December 2022

Councillor: Cabinet member children and families (Councillor Diana Toynebee)	Date 1 December 2022
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- 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.