

**NORTH SOMERSET COUNCIL  
DECISION**

**DECISION OF: EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG  
PEOPLE'S SERVICES  
WITH ADVICE FROM: HEAD OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES;  
HEAD OF FINANCE AND PROPERTY; DIRECTOR, PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES  
DIRECTORATE: PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES**



---

**DECISION NO: PC77 2018/19 SCHEME**

**SUBJECT: ADOPTION WEST**

**KEY DECISION: YES**

**BACKGROUND:**

The development of Regional Adoption Agencies is part of a national regionalising adoption agenda set out in "Regionalising Adoption (July 2015)" and further developed in "Adoption: A Vision for Change (March 2016)". Proposals are also informed by the Education and Adoption Act 2016.

On 25 April 2017 the North Somerset Council Executive approved proposals for the establishment of the Adoption West Regional Adoption Agency and delegated authority for approving detailed implementation plans, including financial, contractual and legal agreements to the Director, People and Communities, subject to council policies and procedures. The Executive also agreed that final approval would be subject to Section 151 Officer, Head of Legal and Democratic Services and relevant Executive Member sign off of a fully costed business case, members' agreement, articles of association, commissioning contract, support services agreement and licenses for premises.

**DECISION:**

That North Somerset Council enters into an agreement with Wiltshire, Gloucestershire, Bristol, Bath and North East Somerset and South Gloucestershire Councils to transfer adoption services to the local authority owned company, Adoption West.

**REASONS:**

The National Government has set out in guidance certain requirements for the delivery of adoption services. The most significant is that local authorities are expected to combine or regionalise adoption services to cover larger geographical areas. The intention is that adoption services would become more efficient and develop improved joint working arrangements with adoption agencies run by voluntary and charitable organisations.

**OPTIONS CONSIDERED:**

Local authorities were given no option other than to enter into regional arrangements. The six local authorities comprising Adoption West considered a number of options for the governance of the regional adoption agency. On 25 April 2017 the North Somerset Executive agreed to the formation of Adoption West as a local authority owned company with a view to transferring adoption services subject to the approval of the company documents.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

North Somerset Council will transfer staff and existing adoption service budgets to the new company. The amount of money transferred is the equivalent of the current spend with a view to the Adoption West company creating opportunities for future efficiency savings.

**Costs**

<b>NORTH SOMERSET CONTRIBUTION AND BUDGETS</b>	<b>ADOPTION WEST BUDGET SUMMARY</b>		
	<b>18/19 budget</b>	<b>18/19 Forecast</b>	<b>19/20 Budget</b>
Salary Budget for Adoption Team & Panel	<b>294,078</b>	<b>296,668</b>	<b>299,960</b>
Other Budgets for Adoption Team & Panel			
Travel	7,520	6,674	<b>7,670</b>
Other costs	3,238	3,594	<b>3,303</b>
Adoption Panel support (Ind. Panel members)	15,750	13,109	<b>16,065</b>
<b>Total Budgets for Adoption Team &amp; Panel</b>	<b>320,586</b>	<b>320,045</b>	<b>326,998</b>
Adoption Activity	62,099	66,824	<b>63,341</b>
<b>Total Budgets to Transfer</b>			<b>390,339</b>

**Funding**

The above funds will transfer from current budgets.

**LEGAL POWERS AND IMPLICATIONS**

The Company documents such as Articles of Association, Inter Authority Agreement, Commissioning Agreement, etc. have been developed by external lawyers and approved by our own legal team.

**CONSULTATION**

See report to Executive 25 April 2017. Further formal consultations have taken place with staff as part of the TUPE transfer process.

**RISK MANAGEMENT**

The risk in service delivery is no different to the current in-house service risks. Additional risks such as service failure and cost overruns will be addressed through the Board of the new company.

**EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

Yes - see report to Executive 25 April 2017.

**CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

None.

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Reports to the Executive 21 June 2016 and 25 April 2017.

**SIGNATORIES:**

**DECISION MAKER(S):**

Signed: .....  .....

Title: Executive for Children and Young People's Services

Date: ..... 11.2.19 .....

**WITH ADVICE FROM:**

Signed: .....  .....

Title: Head of Legal and Democratic Services

Date: ..... 11.2.19 .....

