

Cabinet Meeting Resolution

**Executive
Forward Plan
Reference**

E3340

Adoption West Contract Extension

Date of Meeting	1-Apr-22
The Issue	Adoption West have written to the six local authorities that own Adoption West asking if they wish to extend the contract by five years: this is permissible as outlined when Adoption West was created. It does however need Cabinet approval.
The decision	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To note that all other 5 Local Authority owners of Adoption West have approved the contract extension through their respective Executives. 2. To approve the extension of the Commissioning Agreement with Adoption West for the delivery of services as per the original contractual specification, by 5 years until 28 February 2027; and directs the Director Of Children’s Services and Education in consultation with the Directors of Finance, and Legal and Democratic Services and in consultation with the Cabinet member for Children's Services and Education to agree in writing, in accordance with clause 3.2 of the Commissioning Agreement, a five year contract extension and execute any and all related documents required to implement that extension. 3. To note that the AW Board, which Mary Kearney-Knowles, Director of Children’s Services and Education is part of; is unanimously supportive of the contract extension. This recognises that Adoption West is realising its potential, and delivers a good quality, consistent offer for children and adoptive families across its operational footprint.
Rationale for decision	<p>As part of the national regionalising adoption agenda, Bath and North East Somerset Council, along with five other Local Authorities, set up a Regional Adoption Agency (RAA) named Adoption West (AW). Adoption West commenced operation on 01 March 2019.</p> <p>Adoption West was created as a wholly owned local authority company, limited by guarantee, for the delivery of adoption services on behalf of the six participating authorities (Bath and North East Somerset Council, Wiltshire Council, Bristol Council, Gloucestershire County Council, North Somerset Council and South Gloucestershire Council). It is unique in being the only regional adoption arrangement using this vehicle as its delivery model.</p> <p>The contractual commissioning agreement for the provision of an Integrated Adoption Support Service comes to an end on 28 February 2022. All 6 Local Authorities agreed to a temporary 3-</p>

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	<p>month extension of the contract in December 2021 to ensure stability of Adoption West pending Executive support to the contract extension. B&NES approved the contract extension via delegated authority on January 21st, 2022, extending the contract from February 28th 2022, to May 28th 2022.</p>
Other options considered	<p>The decision to extend the existing arrangements and contract for a further 5 years is the preferred option of all 6 Local Authorities and is supported by the Adoption West Board through an independent chair. The recommendation is that approval is given by Cabinet to extend the contract to its full term of 28 February 2027.</p> <p>There is really only one viable alternative option and that would be for one of the 6 local authorities to take on responsibility and host the RAA. This was considered 3 years ago when the current model was agreed, and nothing has changed since then to suggest this model would now be more favourable. This will remain an option for consideration moving forwards; and will be considered in detail prior to the end of any contract extension.</p>

The Decision is subject to Call-In within 5 working days of publication of the decision