

Record of Decisions

Cornwall Council to join Adopt South West

Decision Taker

Cabinet on 17 October 2023.

Decision

1. That the integration of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly's adoption services into Adopt South West be approved; and
2. That, to facilitate 1. above the Director of Children's Services be given delegated authority to enter into a 'deed of variation' with the other existing partners to amend the current Inter Authority Agreement to the extent necessary to admit Cornwall Council as a full partner.

Reason for the Decision

To enable Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly Adoption Service to join Adopt South West as a full member. Becoming a full member would lead to Cornwall joining the existing partners and sharing equal influence and accountability to further develop and improve the service. All core functions, pre and post adoption order, of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly adoption agency would be delegated to Adopt South West.

Implementation

This decision will come into force and may be implemented on 30 October 2023 unless the call-in procedure is triggered (as set out in the Standing Orders in relation to Overview and Scrutiny).

Information

In June 2015, the Department of Education (DfE) asked all adoption agencies in England to consider how to work much more closely together on a regional basis. The Education and Adoption Act 2016 (s15) gave the Secretary of State a new power to direct one or more named local authorities to make arrangements for any or all of their adoption functions to be carried out on their behalf by one of the local authorities named, or by another agency.

Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly Adoption Service did not join a regional adoption agency at this time and as such are one of only two local authorities nationally not yet part of a Regional Adoption Agency. The DfE have given a clear message to Cornwall that they are expected to join a regional adoption agency. If they fail to do so the Secretary of State can direct that this happens.

As a result, the proposal is for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly Adoption Service to join Adopt South West as a full member. As such, Cornwall Council have developed a Business Case setting out the proposals, the benefits to them, the key outcomes, the financial and legal implications, the suggested timeline and risks.

At the meeting Councillor Bye proposed and Councillor Tranter seconded a motion that was agreed unanimously by the Cabinet, as set out above.

Alternative Options considered and rejected at the time of the decision

There were no alternative options considered.

Is this a Key Decision?

No

Does the call-in procedure apply?

Yes

Declarations of interest (including details of any relevant dispensations issued by the Standards Committee)

None.

Published

20 October 2023

Signed: _____ Date: _____
Leader of Torbay Council on behalf of the Cabinet