

STOCKTON-ON-TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS

PROFORMA

Cabinet Meeting25th January 2018

1. Title of Item/Report

Adoption Tees Valley Delegated Authority

2. Record of the Decision

Consideration was given to a report that sought approval for Stockton Council to host Adoption Tees Valley in line with the proposal in the Full Business Case.

In June 2015, the Department for Education (DfE) published 'Regionalising Adoption' and asked all adoption agencies in England to consider how to work much more closely together on a regional basis. This was enacted as the Education and Adoption Act 2016 which advised authorities and voluntary adoption agencies to join together to form Regional Adoption Agencies (RAA). The Act also 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. By 2020, all local authorities must be part of a Regional Adoption Agency (RAA) under Section 16 of the Education and Adoption Act 2016.

The Government's view was that structural change would improve the process for children and adopters leading to improved numbers of children being adopted, an improved experience for adopters and improved timeliness overall. The DfE expected the RAA programme to deliver consistently good and innovative adoption practice that ensured improved life chances for children.

In October 2015, the Tees Valley local authorities submitted an expression of interest to the Department for Education for an adoption reform grant to scope the development of a Tees Valley Adoption Service. Initially this project was being led by Middlesbrough Borough Council, however, since January 2016, Hartlepool Borough Council had fulfilled the lead authority role.

At its meeting on 10th October, Cabinet received and approved the Full Business Case for Adoption Tees Valley. The Business Case proposed that Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council host the service on behalf of all

the partner Councils. Since this meeting Darlington Borough Council, Hartlepool Borough Council, Middlesbrough Borough Council and Redcar and Cleveland Borough Councils had all approved the delegation of powers in line with the draft Section 101 agreement subject to final amendments.

RESOLVED that the delegated powers be accepted from Darlington Borough Council, Hartlepool Borough Council, Middlesbrough Borough Council and Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council to host Adoption Tees Valley in line with the proposal in the Full Business Case.

3. Reasons for the Decision

To enable the Council; to fulfil the requirements of the Education and Adoption Act 2016, and to support better outcomes and performance for children where adoption is the agreed permanence plan.

4. Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None.

5. Declared (Cabinet Member) Conflicts of Interest

None

6. Details of any Dispensations

N/A

7. Date and Time by which Call In must be executed

Midnight, 2 February 2018

Proper Officer
29 January 2018