



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Cabinet

28th November 2023

Report of the Head of Legal and Democratic Service

Nomination to National Adoption Service Committee

Matter for Decision

Wards Affected: All Wards

Nomination of an elected member to the National Adoption Services Committee

Purpose of the Report:

To nominate Cllr Sian Harris as Cabinet Member for Children and Family Services to be the Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council (the Council”) to the National Adoption Services Committee.

Executive Summary:

All local authorities in Wales are required to enter into one of five specified regional collaborative bodies to ensure that effective joint arrangements are in place between local authorities in Wales for the delivery of adoption services. These directions led to the creation of

Western Bay Adoption Service comprising Neath Port Talbot, Bridgend and Swansea.

The directions also required the creation of a national Governance Board, Advisory Group, and Director of Operations, to have oversight of the regional collaboratives. The National Adoption Services Committee is intended to fulfil that requirement and it is also stipulated that those bodies should exercise similar defined functions in respect of fostering services.

It is proposed that Councillor Sian Harris as the relevant Cabinet Member be appointed as the Council's nominee to the National Adoptions Services Committee.

Background:

The National Adoption Services Committee is a committee underpinned by a legal agreement, which was approved by elected members in Autumn 2022 and will be made up of elected members representing all 22 Welsh Local Authorities.

All local authorities have now formally approved this agreement and an inaugural meeting of the Joint Committee is being planned. Thereafter, it is proposed that the Joint Committee will meet twice yearly on a virtual basis.

It has been identified that the ongoing effective operation of the National Adoption Service requires formal co-operation between the 22 Welsh local authorities; the Joint Committee will facilitate this. As the capacity and functions for the national co-ordination of Foster Wales also sits within a combined Central Team, the remit of the Joint Committee will also include Foster Wales.

The Joint Committee will provide the mechanism for all local authorities to discharge an executive and oversight role for the National Adoption Service and Foster Wales. It will approve / receive:

- (a) The Annual Reports of the National Adoption Service and Foster Wales and the annual programme of work for the National Adoption Service and Foster Wales;
- (b) The budget for the office of the Director and national work for the National Adoption Service and Foster Wales; and
- (c) The agreement, and any changes to the agreement, for the host authority support of the office of the Director and national work for the National Adoption Service and Foster Wales. The agreed host authority is Cardiff Council.

Financial Impacts:

There are no financial impacts associated with this decision.

Integrated Impact Assessment:

A first stage impact assessment is not required as this matter relates to an appointment process alone.

Valleys Communities Impacts:

No implications.

Workforce Impacts:

No implications.

Legal Impacts:

There are no legal implications or impacts.

Risk Management Impacts:

Failing to appoint an elected member to the National Committee will mean the views of the Council will not be facilitated at these meetings.

Consultation:

There is no requirement for external consultation on this item.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that Cllr Sian Harris, as Cabinet Member for Children and Family Services be appointed as the Neath Port Talbot Council nominee to the National Adoption Services Committee.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

This decision is required to fulfil the Council's responsibilities under the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (Joint Adoption Arrangements) (Wales) Directions 2015

Implementation of Decision:

The decision is proposed for implementation after the three day call in period

Appendices:

None

List of Background Papers:

None

Officer Contact:

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