

Notice of key decision to be made under General Exception provisions

The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012

Date of notice: 10 October 2023

To: Councillor Phillip Bateman
Chair of Scrutiny Board

From: Alison Hinds
Director of Children's Services

An intention to make the following key decision, which is to be considered by the Cabinet on 18 October 2023, was not publicised in advance as required by the Regulations.

Report title: Families First for Children Pathfinder

Classification: PUBLIC

The reason(s) for the omission from the forward plan of key decisions and the reason(s) why this decision cannot be delayed until the requisite 28 days have elapsed are:

Wolverhampton were approached by the Department for Education (DfE) to be one of the three wave one local authorities for the Families First for Children pathfinder programme. The programme is the delivery mechanism for implementing some of the most significant reforms to family help, child protection, kinship care and the safeguarding partnership.

The programme was launched in July 2023 and is a fast moving initiative. There is significant focus on engaging agencies across the wider partnership, and in ensuring the proposed new delivery model for children's social care is co-designed with all key stakeholders.

There is an emerging requirement as part of programme to ensure Cabinet and wider Councillors are aware of progress made prior to the submission of the proposed delivery model to the DfE at the end of October. This report will provide the required update.

It is also apparent that there is a need for strategic leadership in a new Deputy Director role across the children's system to support the successful delivery of model and implementation. A delay in this will impact on the programme delivery.

This notice must be provided to the Chair of the Scrutiny Board and to the appropriate democratic support officer at least five clear working days in advance of the relevant Executive meeting.