



# OFFICIAL EXECUTIVE DECISION NOTICE

PUBLISHED BY DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

Notice is hereby given that the following decision(s) have been made today by Cabinet Members at the London Borough of Hillingdon:

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| <b>Title of decision</b>         | FOSTERING REFORMS – REGIONAL END TO END MODEL   |
| <b>Reference No.</b>             | 2026/1674                                       |
| <b>Date of decision</b>          | Friday 10 April 2026                            |
| <b>Call-in expiry date</b>       | Friday 17 April 2026                            |
| <b>Relevant Select Committee</b> | Children, Families & Education Select Committee |
| <b>Relevant Wards</b>            | All   |

## Decision made

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| <b>Cabinet Members making the decision</b> | Councillor Susan O'Brien, Cabinet Member for Children, Families & Education   |
| <b>Decision</b>                            | <p><b>Agreed</b></p> <p>That the Cabinet Member for Children, Families &amp; Education:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Approved Hillingdon's continued involvement in Foster in West London (FwWL) as one of the eight Local Authorities within the region and to commit to an expansion of its role including the delegation of functions that will meet the needs of our residents and meet the new legislative requirements (listed in Appendix A of the associated report) in the tight timescale (September 2026);</li><li>2. Approved London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham continue to act as the lead Local Authority; and</li><li>3. Approved the delegation of decision making in relation to the design and delivery of the new FwWL model to the Corporate Director for Children's Service in consultation with the Cabinet Member portfolio holder, to ensure progress and delivery of the programme within the required timeframes</li></ol> |
| <b>Reason for decision</b>                 | The recommendations aim to ensure Hillingdon remains aligned with national fostering reforms, retains influence   |

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|   | <p>over the design of the emerging end-to-end regional fostering model, and secures the benefits of continued regional collaboration. Continued participation in Foster with West London enables the Council to shape and implement the Government’s Renewing Fostering reforms locally, strengthen foster carer recruitment, and increase the number of children placed locally.</p> <p>Retaining London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham as the lead authority provides stability, continuity and established delivery capacity within the regional hub.</p> <p>Delegating decision making authority to the Corporate Director for Children’s Services is necessary to allow timely progress on detailed design, financial planning and workforce arrangements within tight national timescales, ensuring Hillingdon can respond flexibly to DfE requirements while managing financial and operational risks effectively.</p>   |
| <p><b>Alternative options considered and rejected</b></p> | <p><b>Option 1: Continue to be part of the FwWL Programme (Recommended)</b></p> <p>This option enables West London to shape a model that reflects local needs while meeting emerging national requirements. Progressing at pace may also increase the likelihood of further government investment, given the Minister’s emphasis on supporting authorities leading the programme.</p> <p>Ongoing engagement with regional partners and the DfE will support alignment, maintain momentum, and ensure West London can influence national design while preparing for implementation.</p> <p>Emerging data suggests clear opportunities to align and strengthen fostering recruitment, to increase local carers, enable more children to be placed locally, and reduce spend on independent fostering and residential placements.</p> <p>The financial implications of remaining in the programme will require Hillingdon to identify sufficient, long-term funding.</p> <p><b>Option 2: Not continue to be part of the FwWL programme (not recommended)</b></p> <p>Changing the fostering provision in Hillingdon without regional or national collaboration would be challenging and could disadvantage our children and carers by isolating Hillingdon from other local authorities.</p> |

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|  | Although membership of a regional hub is not currently mandated, exiting the programme would be a divergence away from the current fostering reforms and clear messaging from central government. Further it would inhibit the regions' ability to access future funding which will be conditional on a regional model.   |
| <b>Classification</b>  | Part II – Members Only and Not for Publication  |
| <b>Link to associated report</b>   | That this report be declared as exempt from publication as it involves the disclosure of information in accordance with Section 100(A) and paragraph 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A, in that the report contains information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority, and that the public interest in withholding the information outweighs the public interest in disclosing it. |
| <b>Relevant Officer contact &amp; Directorate</b>                            | Alex Coman – Children's Services  |
| <b>Any interest declared by the Cabinet Member(s) / dispensation granted</b> | N/A   |

### Implementation of decision & scrutiny call-in

| <b>[Internal Use only]</b>                                |   |
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| <b>When can this decision be implemented by officers?</b> | <p>Officers can implement Cabinet Member decision in this notice only from the expiry of the scrutiny call-in period which is:</p> <p><b>5pm on Friday 10 April 2026</b></p> <p>However, this is subject to the decision not being called in by Councillors on the relevant Select Committee. Upon receipt of a valid call-in request, Democratic Services will immediately advise the relevant officer(s) and the decision must then be put on hold.</p> |
| <b>Councillor scrutiny call-in of this decision</b>       | <p>Councillors on the relevant Select Committee shown in this notice may request to call-in this decision. The request must be before the expiry of the scrutiny call-in period above.</p> <p>Councillors should use the Scrutiny Call-in App (link below) on their devices to initiate any call-in request. Further advice can be sought from Democratic Services if required:</p> <p><a href="#">Scrutiny Call-In - Power Apps</a> (secure)</p>         |

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| <b>Further information</b> | <p>These decisions, where applicable, have been taken under The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.</p> <p>This is the formal notice by the Council of the above executive decision, including links to the reports where applicable.</p> <p>If you would like more information on this decision, please contact Democratic Services on 01895 250636 or email: <a href="mailto:democratic@hillingdon.gov.uk">democratic@hillingdon.gov.uk</a>.</p> <p>Circulation of this decision notice is to a variety of people including Members of the Council, Corporate Directors, Officers, Group Secretariats and the Public. Copies are also placed on the Council's website.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Democratic Services<br/>London Borough of Hillingdon<br/>Civic Centre<br/>High Street<br/>Uxbridge<br/>UB8 1UW</b></p> |
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