

From: Clair Bell, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health

Andrew Scott-Clark, Director of Public Health

To: Health Reform and Public Health Cabinet Committee

10th March 2021

Subject: 20/000132 - Bereavement Support Services in Kent and Medway- Procurement Update

Classification: Unrestricted

Previous Pathway: Health Reform and Public Health Committee 21st January 2021

Future Pathway: None

Electoral Division: All

Summary:

Kent County Council (KCC) has been awarded funds via Kent and Medway CCG and NHS England's National Suicide Prevention Programme to commission bereavement support services for under 25-year-olds and people bereaved by suicide.

A paper was presented to Committee on 21st January 2021, which outlined KCC's intention to procure two new bereavement support services for individuals across Kent and Medway. It provided the opportunity for members to comment on the commissioning model.

The overarching aim of these new services is to assist individuals in Kent and Medway who are experiencing high levels of distress and grief by supporting them to manage the impact of their bereavement and reduce the risk factors associated with this event.

This report sets out the proposed decision to award the contract for the relevant services and asks for comments from the Cabinet Committee.

Recommendation:

The Health Reform and Public Health Cabinet Committee is asked to **CONSIDER, ENDORSE** or **COMMENT** on the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health's proposed decision to:

- To award the contract following a competitive procurement process for bereavement support services for three years with potential for extension by up to two years.
- Delegate authority to the Director of Public Health to take relevant actions, including but not limited to; entering into relevant contracts or other legal

agreements and approving extensions within the agreed five-year maximum period, as necessary to implement the decision.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 A paper was presented at Health Reform Public Health Committee on 21st January 2021 (see Background Documents), which outlined KCC's intention to procure two new bereavement support services for individuals across Kent and Medway. One is a specialist bereavement support service for under 25-year-olds and the other is a support service for people bereaved by suicide.
- 1.2 The previous paper provided background details of the need for these support services in Kent and Medway, Key Drivers for Change, and the proposed service outcomes.
- 1.3 KCC is leading this work, with funding secured from the Kent and Medway Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and NHS England's National Suicide Prevention Programme.
- 1.4 These services will help to fill a gap in the current provision, which is especially important as more people may experience bereavement linked to Coronavirus (COVID-19).

2.0 Key Service Outcomes

- 2.1 Through engagement events with the market and people with lived experience, we have understood the variation in the type and level of support needed for both groups and, therefore, decided on an outcomes approach to these new services.
- 2.2 The service(s) outcomes will be met by ensuring that there is staff in place with the relevant knowledge and capability to provide personalised support to both identified groups.
- 2.3 The key outcomes for these services are set out below:
 - Improve service users resilience and their capacity to cope in their surroundings
 - Improve service users physical and mental health (measured by evidence-based tools)
 - Personal goals and outcomes achieved, maintained, or progress towards
 - Reduction in stigma and discrimination.

3.0 Commissioning Model and Procurement Approach

- 3.1 Despite some similarities and shared outcomes between the needs of the groups requiring bereavement support, there are distinct differences in

workforce skills and the required type of support. Therefore, two separate services will be commissioned in Lots covering both Kent and Medway and will be broken down as:

LOT 1 - Specialist Bereavement Service for under 25-year-olds

The service will provide specialist counselling for those aged (3 1/2) to 25 years old who are experiencing complex grief. The specialist support is to be delivered by qualified counsellors with experience in bereavement.

LOT 2 - A Support Service for people bereaved by suicide (all ages)

The service will support people bereaved by suicide to receive the practical and emotional support they need. The service will help family and friends both in the initial days and weeks after the death, as well as signposting support for people who have been bereaved by suicide in previous years.

- 3.2 KCC are leading on the procurement of both bereavement services, however, KCC Public Health team and Kent and Medway CCG have worked collaboratively throughout the procurement process to engage with the market, develop the service specification, and form evaluation questions.
- 3.3 KCC issued the opportunity via Find a Tender on the Kent Business Portal on 25th January 2021 (a high-level timetable for procurement can be found in Appendix A).
- 3.4 The evaluation of each of the tenders began on 25th February 2021. The evaluation is being undertaken by panel members selected for their knowledge and experience. Members of the evaluation panel include commissioners from KCC, Medway Council and Kent and Medway CCG, data analyst, CCG quality lead. For Lot 1, a question will be evaluated by young people and for Lot 2, we are inviting people with lived experience of suicide to evaluate selected questions.

4.0 Contract Mobilisation

- 4.1 Subject to the contract award decision by the Cabinet Member, contract mobilisation will commence on 3rd May 2021, and the anticipated contract start date will be 16th August 2021.
- 4.2 A Mobilisation Board will oversee the deployment of the contract with responsibility for monitoring progress against the new provider(s)' mobilisation plans. The focus will be to ensure the services are ready to be delivered safely in line with service standards and implement sufficient workforce and infrastructure in place for when the contract starts.
- 4.3 The Mobilisation Board members will include KCC and CCG Commissioning Officers, representatives from new provider(s), service users, and other key stakeholders such as Kent Police.

5.0 Financial Implications

- 5.1 The contract will be for three years with a possible two-year extension. The maximum total amount for both services, including possible two-year extensions, is £1,493,750 over five years.
- 5.2 These services will be funded by Kent and Medway CCG and the Kent and Medway Suicide Prevention Team. KCC, commissioning the services on behalf of the CCG, will be the accountable body for financial monitoring and contract management.

6.0 Corporate Implications

- 6.1 The following implications are relevant to this project:
- Legal - The procurement will adhere to the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. Legal advice will be sought if required to support the creation of the contracts. Monitoring of the contract will ensure the successful provider adheres to all relevant legislation as set out in the contract, such as Health and Safety Law and COVID-19 safe regulations.
 - Equalities: Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs) have been undertaken for both services (Appendix B and C). These outlined that both services are likely to have a 'Low' Adverse Equality Impact. We will ensure the services adopt a flexible and accessible approach to people's needs. Consideration will be given to the protected characteristics of 'Age' and 'Religion and Beliefs', which are most likely to be impacted by these services. It will be a requirement for the awarded provider to conduct an Equality Impact Assessment on their delivery model.
 - Data: Data Privacy Impact Assessments have been completed. It is a requirement within the Service Specifications for the awarded provider(s) to complete a DPIA for the data for which they are the controller.
 - Other corporate implications: The services will interact with several other functions within the Council and the wider system of support services, including; Adult Social Care, Integrated Children's Services, Education, Kent Police, Mental Health Providers, Coroner's Office, and local charities. Development of a communications plan to engage key stakeholders will be a vital part of the contract mobilisation.

7.0 Governance

- 7.1 The commissioning of these services, via KCC contract award, is a Key Decision and subject to the normal Executive Decision process.
- 7.2 It is proposed that the Cabinet Member will approve the contract award and authorise appropriate delegations to the Director of Public Health to implement the decision.

8.0 Conclusion

- 8.1 KCC has commenced a competitive procurement of the two bereavement support services to support; bereavement support services for under 25-year-olds and people bereaved by suicide.

- 8.2 It is proposed that the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health will approve the contract award no later than 30th April 2021. This will allow a mobilisation period to commence so that services are ready to start in August 2021.
- 8.3 These new services will fill an identified gap in current provision and support those impacted by bereavement and suicide to improve their resilience, ability to cope, physical and mental health.

Recommendation(s):

The Health Reform and Public Health Cabinet Committee is asked to **CONSIDER**, **ENDORSE** or **COMMENT** on the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health's proposed decision to:

- To award the contract following a competitive process procurement for bereavement support services for three years with potential extension by up to two years.
- Delegate authority to the Director of Public Health to take relevant actions, including but not limited to; entering into relevant contracts or other legal agreements and approving extensions within the agreed five-year maximum period, as necessary to implement the decision.

9.0 Background Documents

- 9.1 Health Reform and Public Health Cabinet Committee 21st January 2021 - Bereavement Support Services in Kent and Medway
<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/documents/s101532/Report.pdf>
- 9.2 National Bereavement Alliance (2017) *A guide to commissioning bereavement services in England*. Accessed via web:
<https://nationalbereavementalliance.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/A-Guide-to-Commissioning-Bereavement-Services-in-England-WEB.pdf>

10.0 Contact Details

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