

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TAKEN BY:

Sue Chandler, Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services

DECISION NO:

. 20/00102

For publication

Key decision

Reason: Expenditure or savings of more than £1m, affecting more than two Electoral Divisions

Subject: Children's Community Support Services Provision

Decision:

As Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Support services, I agree to:
follow a competitive procurement process for children's community support services within the Adults 'Care and Support in the Home' contract.

Delegate decisions on the implementation to the Corporate Director of Children, Young People and Education, or other Officer, in consultation with the Corporate Director of Adult Social Care and Health as appropriate.

Reason(s) for decision:

Background:

There is currently a mixed economy of community support services for disabled children, young people and their families across Kent, predominantly externally sourced providers under spot-purchase arrangements.

These arrangements do not facilitate a holistic approach to the market across Kent, generating a wide range of locally agreed rates and costs which are difficult to manage and administer. Information and intervention regarding effectiveness and performance is difficult within disparate working arrangements and variable contractual arrangements.

For some time it has been our ambition to find a better commissioning solution to the provision of home based care and support services for disabled children.

Adults Social Care faced similar challenges and have procured a framework (Care and Support in the Home) which brings a common set of terms and conditions, performance and reporting criteria as well as the opportunity to make more informed decisions about provision for each families requirements as identified by Care Managers and Social Workers.

Opportunities now exist to integrate support to disabled children and their families with this framework. Analysis suggests strong alignment between those providers locally spot purchased for support to children and young people and those included in the Adults Care and Support in the Home framework.

Outcomes:

This service is purchased to meet the KCC Strategic Outcome of 'Children and young individuals in Kent get the best start to life'.

The main supporting outcomes of the above are:

- Kent communities are resilient and provide strong and safe environments to successfully raise children and young people
- We keep vulnerable families out of crisis and more children and young people out of KCC care
- Children and young people have better physical and mental health

Financial implications:

The current budget for Care Support Services is £1.3m. The contract for Care and Support in the Home is due to expire on 31 March 2024, with potential for extension for a further 36 months.

The financial implication of this decision is therefore circa £3.9m followed by a potential further circa £3.9m should extensions be put in place. This subject to budget setting decisions and fluctuations in need.

Equality Implications: An Equality Impact Assessment for these service has been completed and any recommendations for improvements in service delivery have been incorporated in the service specification.

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

This matter was discussed by the Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee on 9 March 2021.

Any alternatives considered:

Options considered include:

1. Do Nothing – this option would allow the continuance of local spot purchasing of community support for disabled children and all of the current risks (financial and otherwise) that are inherent in this approach. This option was discounted for this reason.
2. Procure new Framework ringfenced to Disabled Children and Young People (0-25) – this option is viable and would provide commonality of terms and conditions alongside the opportunity to manage performance, costs and provision in a more holistic fashion.
3. Expand the Care and Support in the Home contract let by Adults services to include provision for adolescents and children (0-25). The framework already provides support to individuals 18+ and given the correlation of suppliers to current arrangements there should be minimal disruption to the market in taking this approach. This is the recommended option.

Any interest declared when the decision was taken and any dispensation granted by the Proper Officer:

None

Sue Carter

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signed

19 March 2021

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date