

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:

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

DECISION NO:

22/00090

For publication Yes

Key decision: No

Title of Decision: Procurement of Interpreting and Communication Services for People who are D/deaf and Deafblind

Decision: As Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health, I propose to:
a) **APPROVE** the procurement of Interpreting and Communication Services for People who are D/deaf and Deafblind
b) **DELEGATE** authority to the Corporate Director Adult Social Care and Health to take relevant actions to facilitate the required procurement activity.

Reason(s) for decision: Kent County Council's (KCC) statutory responsibilities under The Care Act 2014, Equality Act 2010 and the Accessible Information Standard 2016 are partly delivered through an Interpreting and Communication Framework for People who are D/deaf or Deafblind. The framework provides a list of pre-vetted and approved communication professionals that interpreting and translation services can be purchased from as and when required. The framework commenced in June 2019 and will expire in June 2023. New contractual arrangements for purchasing these communication services need to be in place by 17 June 2023. This decision supports the delivery of the KCC Adult Social Care Strategy 2022-2027 - Making a Difference Every Day by offering a person-centred approach to accessing communication support for people who need it.

Financial Implications: The estimated annual cost of this service to Kent County Council is £20,000 per annum, or £80,000 over the proposed four-year contract period. Other public Sector authorities will also be able to use the contract, making the total estimated spend via the service £50,000 per annum and £200,000 over the four-year contractual period.

Legal Implications: Commissioners will follow the Public Contract Regulations (2015) and Spending the Council's Money guidance in relation to the procurement undertaken.

Equality Implications: An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out and has concluded that there should be no negative impact on people with protected characteristics.

Data Protection Implications: It is likely that a Data Protection Impact Assessment will be required, and this will be completed once the service specification is produced.

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation: The proposed decision will be discussed at the Adult Social Care Cabinet Committee on 28 September 2022 and the outcome included in the paperwork which the Cabinet Member will be asked to sign.

Any alternatives considered and rejected:

- Do nothing – This would pose risks to the council in terms of control over costs, service quality and inconsistent service provision
- Commission managed interpreting services from a single provider – This option has been discounted due to the lost opportunity to develop relationships with and support local interpreters, and the potential to lose control over quality and interpreter availability.
- Commissioning D/deaf interpreting services from an external provider via an existing Framework – National frameworks do not guarantee the provision of qualified interpreters, and research suggests this type of framework directly leads to a poor service to users which in turn increases the demand on social services e.g., poor interpreting can lead to people not understanding the issue and the person may require additional support from health and social care providers.

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

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signed

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date