

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – URGENT RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:

Sue Chandler, Cabinet Member for Integrated Children’s Services

(in consultation with Clair Bell, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health)

DECISION NO:

22/00094

For publication [Do not include information which is exempt from publication under schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972]

Key decision: YES

Key decision criteria. The decision will:

- a) result in savings or expenditure which is significant having regard to the budget for the service or function (currently defined by the Council as in excess of £1,000,000); or
- b) be significant in terms of its effects on a significant proportion of the community living or working within two or more electoral divisions – which will include those decisions that involve:
 - the adoption or significant amendment of major strategies or frameworks;
 - significant service developments, significant service reductions, or significant changes in the way that services are delivered, whether County-wide or in a particular locality.

Subject Matter / Title of Decision: Family Hubs

Decision:

As Cabinet Member for Integrated Children’s Services, I agree:

- a. the principle of adopting a Family Hub Model of provision for Open Access Services in Kent, in accordance with the Government Policy on Family Hubs and Start for Life which align with the priorities of the Executive and the Council as per the Strategic Statement.
- b. to accept relevant funding via the Family Hub Transformation Authority programme, including agreement to the terms of the Memorandum of Understanding requirement to participate as a Transformation Authority.
- c. To confirm that any implementation or full delivery of a Family Hub Model in Kent will be subject to the development of detailed proposals, appropriate consultation, engagement and governance through normal Executive Decision-making arrangements.
- d. delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Children, Young People and Education, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Integrated Children’s Services, to undertake relevant actions, including but not limited to entering into contracts or other legal agreements, as necessary to implement the decision.

The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health was consulted on the decision due to service implications of Family Hubs on activity within Public Health – she supported the decision.

Reason(s) for decision:

To explore how the Family Hubs model could work in Kent. This work will look at how and where services are delivered: virtual, through outreach, and/or face-to-face, to support our vulnerable families in their own communities.

Prior to any implementation or delivery of Family Hubs, detailed proposals will be subject to further decision-making but a Strategic Policy decision to adopt the principle of developing a Family Hub Model for Kent is required at this stage to adhere to relevant deadlines from the DfE to be considered a Family Hub Transformation Authority.

How the proposed decision supports the Framing Kent's Future - Our Council Strategy 2022-2026:

The Council's Strategic Reset Programme has set new Council wide ambitions and aims for how the Council will operate in the future. Aligned to the Strategic Reset Programme and the Strategic Statement "Framing Kent's Future", the Family Hub Model aims to achieve:

- A more targeted open access offer
- An enhanced digital offer across universal provision
- More productive and efficient ways of working using technology and digital solutions
- A greater quality of experience for service users, residents, and staff, informed by a more in depth understanding of what communities need and managing the demand facing the council
- The best use of our data, assets, and trading companies.
- Value for money
- A potential reduction in overall assets within Kent County Council

Financial Implications:

Access to national grants up to £10m over 3 years will be dependent on the specific proposals developed.

Further financial due diligence will be undertaken at the proposal development stage, which will be subject to further decision-making.

Legal Implications:

This decision includes the entering into a Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU) with the DfE which creates obligations to progress with transformation scoping and proposal development to support Kent becoming a Family Hub Authority. Access to the associated funding of up to £10m, depending on the type and level of transformation activity eventually progressed, is conditional on compliance with the terms of the MOU and demonstration of progress toward an effective Family Hub Model.

Equalities Implications:

Assessment at strategic level regarding implementation of the Family Hub model does not have any negative implications (further details contained in appended EQIA).

The Transformation activity will be reliant on the feedback from parents and carers to help shape the services with all detailed proposals being subject to further engagement and formal decision-making (which will be informed by a separate updated EqIA).

Reason for Urgency:

KCC has been exploring scope for shifting to a Family Hubs as an Authority to improve the delivery of Open Access services following the Government Launch of the Family Hubs programme in November 2021.

KCC engaged with the Family Hubs Framework in August 2022 which included an application to be a Transformation Authority – the confirmation that KCC had been selected as a Transformation Authority has now been received and agreement to progress to the transformation stage is required to access relevant funding. This agreement from KCC is required within a much shorter timeframe than was anticipated. It is therefore not possible for this decision to comply with normal Executive Decision notice periods, hence the use of Special Urgency.

Prior to any implementation or delivery of Family Hubs, detailed proposals will be subject to further decision-making but a Strategic Policy decision to adopt the principle of developing a Family Hub Model for Kent is required at this stage to adhere to relevant deadlines from the DfE to be considered a Family Hub Transformation Authority.

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

No Cabinet Committee consultation possible due to the urgency process. A report setting out the reasons for urgency will be presented to the next Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee on 29th November and to the next Health Reform and Public Health Cabinet Committee on 23rd November.

The Chair of the Scrutiny Committee, in addition to agreeing that the decision could not be reasonably deferred provided the following comments:

Mr Booth supported the decision.

The Group Spokespeople of the Scrutiny Committee providing the following comments:

Dr Sullivan expressed significant concerns about the nature and timing of the decision, highlighting the lack of Cabinet Committee consideration on 12 October 2022. (Further details may be provided upon request)

The Chair and spokespeople of the Children's Young People and Education Cabinet Committee provided the following comments:

Mr Brady and Mrs Dean expressed significant concerns about nature and timing the decision, highlighting the lack of Cabinet Committee consideration on 12 October 2022. (Further details may be provided upon request)

The Chair and spokespeople of the Health Reform and Public Health Cabinet Committee provided the following comments:

No comments

NOTES:

Any detailed operational questions raised in comments were shared the Executive for consideration and response.

Other consultation:

Detailed proposals for Family Hubs will be subject to relevant consultation and governance activity.

Any alternatives considered and rejected:

1. Do nothing: continue to deliver our existing Open Access services without change.
2. Progress with exploration of the Family Hub Model without being part of the Transformation Fund set up by the DfE.

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

None



14 October 2022

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signed

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date