

## KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – RECORD OF DECISION

### DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:

Mrs Sue Chandler, Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services

### DECISION NUMBER:

24/00124

**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 Hub Year 4 Grant

### Decision:

That the Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Adult Care and Public Health (subject to receiving confirmation from the DfE) agrees to:

- a) **APPROVE**, the acceptance of the Year 4 Family Hub Grant Award and the deployment of the grant funding in accordance with the grant conditions and the adopted service model;
- (b) **DELEGATE** authority to the Director of Operational Integrated Children's Services and Director of Public Health, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services and the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health to agree the terms and conditions to enter into the necessary grant agreements;
- (c) **DELEGATE** authority to the Director of Operational Integrated Children's Services and Director of Public Health to deliver the requirements of the grant;
- (d) **DELEGATE** authority of required expenditure to the Director of Operational Integrated Children's Services and Director of Public Health, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services and the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health, to be managed in line with Council procurement rules;
- (e) **DELEGATE** authority to the Director of Operational Integrated Children's Services and Director of Public Health, to take other necessary actions, including but not limited to entering into contracts or other legal agreements, as required to implement the decision;

### Reason(s) for decision:

March 2025 marks the end of the initial transformation period which has seen the Council adopt a policy position that moved from our previous Open Access model, to the Family Hub model.

The Government's commitment to the Family Hub model has been reconfirmed by the announcement of a further year of funding for Family Hub authorities.

Acceptance of the additional grant money requires a Key Decision from the Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services.

In response to the County Council debate on 13 March 2025 in relation to decision 24/00093, year 4 funding, a proportion will be utilised to supplement the Kent Children Services' Family Hubs offer in Thanet and the Isle of Sheppey in accordance with the grant conditions and the adopted service model.

## **Background**

In October 2022 the Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services took [decision 22/00094](#) and Kent County Council (KCC) signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Department for Education (DfE) which accepted the initial 3-year transformation grant funding. This decision set out the requirement for the development of detailed proposals, public consultation and appropriate governance ahead of a further Key Decision on the Family Hub model.

In November 2023, after the development of detailed proposals, public consultation and appropriate governance, KCC Cabinet took [decision 23/00092](#) to implement the Family Hub model across the county.

Contained within the 2024 Autumn Budget, the Chancellor of the Exchequer included an additional £69m for a further year of funding for existing Family Hub authorities across the country. In December 2024, DfE confirmed that KCC will be awarded £4,099,400 to continue the Family Hub transformation from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026.

DfE have now provided full details of the requirements for Year 4 including a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

## **Financial Implications:**

The DfE have confirmed that KCC will be awarded £4,099,400 to continue the Family Hub transformation from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026. The grant allocation for each Programme Strand has been set out in 2.4. The delivery requirements and conditions have been reviewed and are considered to be deliverable and in line with the prior Family Hub approach.

The funding will be used to ensure the sustainable and consistent delivery of the adopted Family Hub model across Kent. It is not expected to impact the pressure on existing revenue or capital budgets.

## **Legal Implications:**

KCC has a statutory duty to provide, so far as is reasonably practicable, sufficient provision of Family Hubs to meet local need. KCC will continue to fulfil its duty to provide sufficient family hubs to meet need across Kent.

Acceptance of the grant money does mean that KCC is obligated to comply with the delivery requirements, terms and conditions that accompany the funding, as set out above.

The implementation of the Family Hub Programme is in line with the DfE Family Hub National Programme Guidance, available [Family Hubs and Start for Life programme: local authority guide 2025 to 2026 - GOV.UK](#).

### **Equalities implications**

The previous Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been reviewed and updated. There are no anticipated adverse impacts that are associated with the acceptance of the Year 4 grant money, given the expectation that any future operations and activity will be designed to complement, develop and build on the established Family Hub arrangements.

### **Data Protection implications**

A Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) is not required for the acceptance of the year 4 grant award.

### **Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:**

Full Council considered the Commissioned Family Hubs decision on 13 March 2025. Comments were made in relation to the use of Year 4 DfE Grant Money and a recommendation made that the Cabinet Member should explore the option of directly funding Seashells and Millmead from the Year 4 Family Hub grant money to deliver Family Hub services from their own resources.

The CYPE Cabinet Committee endorsed the proposals to accept the Year 4 grant, subject to review delegated to the Director for Integrated Children's Services. The PROD has been amended to facilitate the exploration by the Cabinet Member to utilise Year 4 money to fund core Family Hub Services in line with our adopted service model directly at Seashells and Millmead for the 2025/26 financial year.

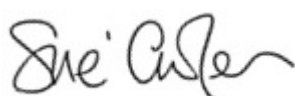
### **Any alternatives considered and rejected:**

The option to not take accept the grant money has been considered. Given the financial challenges the Council currently faces, it is not considered appropriate to decline the further funding from the DfE.

While understanding the risks associated with a late announcement, we have discounted the option of not accepting the additional funding in recognition that children, families and communities in Kent will benefit from additional support.

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

None.



21/03/2025

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signed

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date