

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – RECORD OF OFFICER DECISION

DECISION TAKEN BY:

Richard Smith, Corporate Director of Adult Social Care and Health

DECISION NO:

OD/25/00017

For publication

Subject matter: Extension of The Sanctuary Access For Eligible Residents (SAFER) Scheme

Cabinet Member decision to which this action relates:

The Single Point of Access is delivered via a Memorandum of Understanding with the Office of Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC). This arrangement is in place until 30 November 2025 and is in line with the Domestic Abuse Framework criteria, agreed under Key [Decision - 23/00060 - Domestic Abuse Act Framework 2023-25](#).

[Decision - 25/00033 - Extension of Domestic Abuse Act Framework and KIDAS contract](#) was an agreement to extension of the Framework along with the KIDAS contract to deliver those services and **DELEGATES** the following:

- authority to the Corporate Director Adult Social Care and Health, in consultation with the Corporate Director for Children, Young People and Education where applicable depending on affected portfolios, to administer any further DA Act grant monies under the funding / governance framework put in place by this decision, including the determination of Officer Decisions to progress activity via the framework.
- authority to the Corporate Director Adult Social Care and Health, in consultation with the Chief Executive to take other necessary actions, including but not limited to entering into contracts or other legal agreements, as required to implement this decision.

The Property Security element awarded via [key decision 23/00074](#), to 24-7 Locks Ltd, in October 2023 is in place until 30 November 2025. This key decision **DELEGATES**:

- authority to the Corporate Director Adult Social Care and Health, after consultation with the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health and the Corporate Director for Finance, to agree the relevant contract extensions as required

Decision:

As Corporate Director of Adult Social Care and Health I agree to the extension of The Sanctuary Access for Eligible Residents Scheme, which includes:

- Continuing the Single Point of Access for the Sanctuary Access For Eligible Residents (SAFER) Scheme (delivered via Memorandum of Understanding held with the Office of Police and Crime Commissioner) until 30 November 2027.
- Implementing two single-year contract extension opportunities of the property security element until 30 November 2027. Contract number SC220348.

Reason(s) for decision:

The SAFER Scheme, which provides sanctuary to survivors of domestic abuse in Kent, is due to

expire 30 November 2025. The SAFER Scheme contains three main elements as per the below:

Element	Offer	Delivered by	Contractual Arrangement
Single Point of Access	Assessment & Triage into the property security element. Direct referral to specialist domestic abuse support for adults and link to support for children and young people.	Victim Support	Memorandum of Understanding with the Office of Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC)
Property Security	Property assessment, security advice, enhancements, installation of enhancements and signposting for support for children and young people.	24-7 Locks Ltd	Contract SC220348
Specialist Domestic Abuse Support	Tailored support for adults (16+) including safety planning, advocacy, tenancy sustainment, budget management, counselling, therapeutic support and signposting to other relevant agencies for additional support e.g. Mental health, substance misuse, debt advice.	Kent Integrated Domestic Abuse Service (KIDAS)	Delivery via existing Kent Integrated Domestic Abuse Service (KIDAS) contract SS1641. <i>The SAFER Scheme also acts as a pathway for children and young people to access The Safe Accommodation Support Service (SASS) contract SC 220225.</i>

The Scheme has been evaluated and reviewed extensively assessing the data collated from the dashboard that was co-designed between KCC and the providers (Victim Support and 24-7 Locks Ltd). The review has demonstrated that the SAFER Scheme is performing well and aims and objectives are being met as intended. It has shown positive impacts for survivors, including supporting the council in fulfilling its statutory duties under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 and aligning with various council strategies and policies.

The review found that the SAFER Scheme is achieving its three main objectives:

- Enable people to remain in their own home (where it safe to do so, and where the perpetrator does not live).

- Improve safety, health and well-being.
- Prevent harm.

The review found that the property security provider (24-7 Locks Ltd) for the SAFER Scheme is excelling in delivering outcomes and outputs. The service is performing well and the provider is achieving KPI targets quarter on quarter.

The Scheme brings together the councils core commissioned services; The Kent Integrated Domestic Abuse Service (KIDAS) for adults 16+ and The Safe Accommodation Support Service (SASS) for children & young people 0-19 up to 25 with additional needs. The SAFER Scheme enhances the Council's safe accommodation support offer, in line with the DA Act.

The Scheme has dramatically increased the number of referrals into the Safe Accommodation Support Service (SASS) and has ensured that children residing in 'Safe Accommodation' can access commissioned specialist domestic abuse support.

Financial Implications:

The costs for whole SAFER Scheme are met in full via funding received from the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government. Domestic Abuse Act Funding allocations have been confirmed until March 2026.

The costs to implement this decision are included within budget forecasts and includes the draw down of unspent Domestic Abuse Act Grant funding from previous years from reserves.

Costs to continue delivery of the SAFER Scheme to 30 November 2027 totals **£967,696**, broken down by financial year as follows:

1st Extension: 1 December 2025 – 30 November 2026			
SAFER Scheme element	Contractual arrangement	Extension Dates	Cost
Single Point of Access	MOU with OPCC	1.12.2025 – 30.11.2026	£131,348.00
Property Security Element	Contract SC220348 with 24-7 Locks Ltd	1.12.2025 – 30.11.2026	£352,500.00
Specialist Domestic Abuse Support	Delivery via Kent Integrated Domestic Abuse Service (KIDAS) contract SS1641	This has been implemented separately via key decision 25/00033	
TOTAL			£483,848.00

2nd Extension: 1 December 2026 – 30 November 2027			
SAFER Scheme element	Contractual arrangement	Extension Dates	Cost
Single Point of Access	MOU with OPCC	1.12.2026 – 30.11.2027	£131,348.00
Property Security Element	Contract SC220348 with 24-7 Locks Ltd	1.12.2026 – 30.11.2027	£352,500.00
Specialist Domestic Abuse	Delivery via Kent Integrated	This has been implemented separately via key decision 25/00033	

Support	Domestic Abuse Service (KIDAS) contract SS1641	
TOTAL		£483,848.00

Legal implications:

The Property Security contract for the SAFER Scheme includes two extension opportunities that were built in when it was procured in 2023 under PCR 2015.

The SAFER Scheme plays a part in supporting the Council in delivering its statutory duties under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.

The Act mandates Local Authorities statutory duties, including offering support to survivors and children residing in safe accommodation.

In addition to the Domestic Abuse Act, the SAFER Scheme also aligns with the following legislation:

- The Care Act 2014
- The Victims and Prisons Act 2024

Equality Implications:

An Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed and shows no negative impact on extending the security property element and the single point of access, for the SAFER Scheme until 30 November 2027.

The continuation to offer the SAFER scheme will help continue to address those who face barriers when accessing domestic abuse support in Kent.

Comments received from any Members or Officers consulted:

The Strategic Advisor for Social Work, Quality and Safeguarding Adult Social Care and Health (and The SAFER Scheme project sponsor), has been briefed and is in agreement on the continuation of the SAFER Scheme.

The cross directorate New Burdens Funding group, who manage the Domestic Abuse Act Grant, have been consulted and are in support of the continuation of the SAFER Scheme.

The ASCH Directorate Management Team was consulted on 21 May 2025 and agreed to utilise both extension opportunities available for the Sanctuary Access For Eligible Residents Scheme bringing the service up to 30 November 2027.

The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health, and the Corporate Director of Finance have been consulted and endorsed continuing the SAFER Scheme.

Any alternatives considered and rejected:

Do nothing:

- Impact on the Council delivering its statutory duty under the DA Act will potentially not be met.
- Non-efficient use of available extension opportunities in current contract
- Doesn't align to Council wide strategies and policies. DA Act funding will not be utilised risking further funding amounts. There will be an increased risk of vulnerability to victims and

survivors of domestic abuse residing in the community

- Impact on costs and wider services and partner agencies

Develop a new service to be procured and in place by 1 December 2025:

- Lack of specialist market as experienced during procurement of the service, not cost effective
- Lack of time to develop service, follow formal governance routes and run procurement exercise which would also incur additional costs to the Council

Doesn't align to Council wide strategies and policies

Any conflict of interest declared by any executive member consulted by the decision maker and any dispensation granted by the Proper Officer:

None



1 August 2025