

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – RECORD OF OFFICER DECISION

Executive

DECISION TAKEN BY:

Sarah Hammond
Corporate Director Adult Social Care and Health

DECISION NO:

OD-26-00017

For publication (yes or no) Yes

Subject matter/ title: Kent Carers' Support Service

Cabinet Member decision to which this action relates:

25/00116 – Kent Carers' Support Service

[Executive Decision](#)

Decision: Enter into contract with Involve Kent Ltd for the Kent Carers Support Service – Lot 1 following the conclusion of the procurement exercise.

Reason(s) for decision: A Cabinet Member decision (decision number 24/0113) was taken on 31 January 2025 to start the procurement exercise for a new Carer's Support Services Contract, combining the current Carers' Short Breaks and Community Navigation (Part B) services.

The new Carers' Support Service Contract is split into two Lots – Lot 1 for East Kent and Lot 2 for West Kent. Procurement for the Carers' Support Service was undertaken and tenders were given from 30 June and 1 August to submit. Following formal evaluation of the bids submitted as part of the procurement exercise identified neither tenderer met the individual minimum thresholds required for specific quality-related questions submitted for Lot 1 (East Kent), therefore Lot 1 was deemed not successful. Procurement for Lot 2 (West Kent) was successful.

Following advice from the council's Commercial and Procurement division a further procurement exercise has been undertaken for Lot 1 which has been successful.

Kent County Council has statutory responsibilities under The Care Act 2014 which include assessing the needs of any adult (cared for or carer) with an appearance of need for care and support, and arranging services where appropriate to meet the unmet eligible needs of adults living in Kent. This decision seeks to award contract to the successful provider, Involve Ltd for Lot 1.

How the proposed decision supports the Council's Strategic Statement:

The proposed decision aligns with Priority 5 of Reforming Kent – the Council's Strategic Statement by recognising and supporting the needs of carers and engaging with carers' support groups around the support and recognition carers can be provided

Financial Implications: When going out to tender the ceiling price for Lot 1 was set at: £3,360,400.00.

The annual price submitted for Lot 1, is £3,060,912.5, meaning an annual reduction of £299,487.5 compared to the ceiling price set.

Additionally the successful bid signed up to the Supplier Incentive Programme potentially reducing the contract price by a further 3%, a reduction of £91,827.37. This potential saving, to KCC, is contingent on effective rebates via the Supplier Incentive Programme being achieved.

Excluding the reduced price through the Supplier Incentive Programme the contract price over the lifetime of the contract will be £21,426,387.5 (initial three years including the two-two year extension options).

This is a fixed price contract to ensure budget predictability and prevents overspend. KCC will pay 1/12 of the budget each month to avoid large upfront payments, which is also in line with other prevention contracts. Providers are encouraged to use resources efficiently to meet the high demand for services, ensuring value for money.

Legal implications: KCC has statutory responsibilities under The Care Act 2014 include assessing the needs of any adult (cared for or carer) with an appearance for care and support and arranging services and where appropriate meeting the unmet eligible needs of adults living in Kent. Where it appears to the local authority that a carer may have needs for support (whether currently or in the future), a carer's assessment must always be offered. In summary, the services are necessary and have allowed KCC to recommission a new carers offer that better meets the needs of carers

Commissioners have followed the Procurement Act 2023 regulations and Spending the Council's Money in relation to this procurement exercise.

Equality Implications: An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed for the activity of recommissioning the service. The aim of the new service offer will be to deliver a service which is more identifiable to carers, able to reach a greater number of carers from different communities and with different protected characteristics. The Equality Impact Assessment for the new service will look at all areas and in particular the issue of 'intersection' of different characteristics on people who may be impacted by more than two protected characteristics at the same time.

Data Protection implications: A Data Protection Impact Assessment has been developed and will be monitored within the contract management function of the contract

Comments received from any Members or Officers consulted: Both the Corporate Director Finance (S151 Officer) and the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care have been consulted and endorsed the officer decision.

Any alternatives considered and rejected: Following the unsuccessful procurement for Lot 1 the option of 'doing nothing' was considered, however it was quickly dismissed. Without a new contract in place to support carers across the county it will have a negative impact on carers put the council at risk on both a financial basis and with regard to meeting statutory duties.

- Option 1 Undertake a negotiation and direct award for Lot 1 with one of the bidders for Lot 2 who met the minimum quality threshold. This would be a short process.
- Option 2 Undertake a competitive process, in the form of a procurement exercise, for Lot 1.

Option 2 is the preferred option as it will ensure KCC is achieving best value and the required level of quality for this contract.

Any conflict of interest declared by any executive member consulted by the decision maker and any dispensation granted by the Proper Officer: None

Barclay Hammond

20 May 2026

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signed

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date