

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – RECORD OF OFFICER DECISION

Executive

DECISION TAKEN BY:

Michael Thomas, Sam
Director Operations Short Term Support

DECISION NO:

OD-26-00030

For publication: YES

Subject matter: Community Services Contract (SC220322) - Lot 1: Independent Advocacy Service Contract Extension

Cabinet Member decision to which this action relates:[THE REPORT](#)

A cabinet member decision was recorded on 15 of March 2023 (decision number 23/00023) to

- a) **EXTEND** the current Kent Advocacy Hub and Mental Health Assessment contracts for a period of up to four months;
- b) **AWARD** contracts to successful providers for the provision of Community Services Contracts (Mental Health Assessment and Independent Advocacy Services);
- c) **DELEGATE** authority to the Corporate Director Adult Social Care and Health to take other relevant actions, including but not limited to finalising the terms of and entering into required contracts or other legal agreements, as necessary to implement the decision; and
- d) **DELEGATE** authority to the Corporate Director Adult Social Care and Health, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health and the Corporate Director Finance, to agree the relevant contract extensions as required.

Decision:

EXTEND the current Independent Advocacy Service Contract for a period of 12 months, from 1 August 2026 to 31 July 2027.

Reason(s) for decision:

The proposed extension aims to ensure the Authority continues meeting its Care Act statutory duties in provision of independent advocacy under the terms of the Mental Capacity Act 2005, the Mental Health Act 2007, the Health and Social Care Act 2012, and the Care Act 2014, across all categories of need, including young people in transition to adult services.

The current contract arrangement is performing well. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and contract management arrangements put in place for the contract have ensured there is regular communication between Officers and the incumbent provider, and confidence in the quality of the service being delivered.

Enacting the first of the permitted extensions for the Independent Advocacy Service contract from

1/08/2026 to 31/07/2027 will ensure service continuity for people using the service and allow Officers to begin exploring future options and alignment with LGR.

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

The proposed decision supports Aim 3 of Reforming Kent – Supporting Residents that need help, by providing services which support people to make choices and reducing long term dependency.

Financial Implications:

The annual value of the Independent Advocacy Services is £1,599,400 (£7,997,000 total, including the two potential contract extension periods).

Legal implications:

The Authority has statutory duties to deliver advocacy services under the Mental Capacity Act (amended 2019), the Mental Health Act (2007), the Health and Social Care Act (2012) and the Care Act (2014), across all categories of need, including to young people in transition to adult services. There is provision, under the existing contract, for two optional extension periods of 12 months each (1 August 2026 to 31 July 2028).

Equality Implications:

An EQIA was completed when the services were commissioned. There are no equality implications to extending the contracts for one year.

Comments received from any Members or Officers consulted:

The Corporate Director Finance (S151 Officer) and Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care have both been consulted and have endorsed the decision.

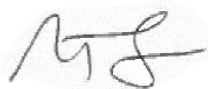
Pursuant to the scheme of delegation, Michael Thomas-Sam (**Director of Operations**) has been granted delegated authority to take officer decisions within the scope of their role and responsibilities.

Any alternatives considered and rejected:

Allow the current contract to end on 31 July 2026

Kent County Council has a statutory duty under the Care Act to provide independent advocacy. The current contract arrangement is performing well and meets these statutory requirements.

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



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signed

5 June 2026

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date