

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:

Georgia Foster,
Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care

DECISION NUMBER:

26/00057

Executive Decision – Key

26/00057 Community Wellbeing Service for Older People, Physical Disability and Dementia

Decision: As Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, I propose to:

- a) **APPROVE** the commissioning of a new Community Wellbeing Service for Older People, Physical Disability and Dementia;
- b) **APPROVE** a six-month extension on the current Wellbeing Services in the Community Contracts to enable effective mobilisation and transition to the new service;
- c) **DELEGATE** authority to the Corporate Director, Adult Social Care and Health to take relevant actions to secure and manage the six-month extension; negotiate, finalise the terms of, and (in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care) award the contract for the Community Wellbeing Service for Older People, Physical Disability and Dementia;
- d) **DELEGATE** authority to the Corporate Director, Adult Social Care and Health (in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and S151 Officer) to exercise any approved contract extensions;
- e) **DELEGATE** authority to the Corporate Director, Adult Social Care and Health (in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and S151 Officer), to accept and deploy any additional external funding secured during the lifetime of the contract to enhance the approved service, provided this does not create any unfunded financial commitment for the Council: and
- f) **DELEGATE** authority to the Corporate Director, Adult Social Care and Health to enter relevant contracts or other legal agreements as required to implement the decision.

Reasons for decision:

The proposed Community Wellbeing Service for Older People, Physical Disability and Dementia will replace the existing Wellbeing Services in the Community (older people (55+), people with dementia and their families, and people with physical disabilities). Wellbeing services are a key element of Kent County Council's prevention offer, supporting people to maintain their health and wellbeing and independence, while preventing, reducing or delaying the need for statutory care and support services.

The current Wellbeing Services in the Community contracts expire on 31 March 2027 with no further extension options available. The proposal for a six-month

extension (1 April 2027 to 30 September 2027) to the current contract will allow for procurement and mobilisation of the new service whilst maintaining service continuity. The new service will commence on 1 October 2027.

The current contracts are:

- Wellbeing Services in the Community for older people (55+)
- Wellbeing Services in the Community for people with dementia and their families
- Wellbeing Services in the Community for people with a physical disability

The new service will be commissioned through a single procurement exercise comprising four lots, operating under a Strategic Partner and Service Delivery Network model. It will provide support for people aged 55 and over, adults with physical disabilities, and people living with dementia and their families.

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

This commissioning exercise supports the priorities of Reforming Kent 2025-28 by enabling older people, people with physical disabilities, and those living with dementia to live healthy, independent, and fulfilling lives within their communities. The Community Wellbeing Service focuses on prevention and early intervention, helping individuals maintain independence, build resilience, and stay connected to local support networks.

The proposed model aligns with the Council's strategic shift towards prevention and early intervention, supporting better outcomes, greater independence, stronger community resilience, and reduced reliance on higher-cost statutory services. Delivery will be based on partnership working with local communities, the VCSE sector, health partners, and other organisations to provide integrated, person-centred support.

Overall, the investment in sustainable community wellbeing services will help residents remain independent and socially connected for longer, while delivering value for money through reduced demand for more intensive support services.

Financial implications:

The proposed cost of recommissioning the Community Wellbeing Service for Older People, Physical Disability and Dementia is £2.62m per annum. The new service length will be two years (1 October 2027 – 30 September 2029) with two optional extension periods of 12 months. The estimated maximum value over the full four-year term is approximately £10.48 million. This is within the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP).

The six-month extension of the current contracts is estimated to cost £1.42m. The proposed extension reflects contract growth implemented during Years 4 and 5, resulting in costs that are £222,087 (full year) above the amount currently provided for within the MTFP. The subsequent tender exercise will realign expenditure with the MTFP allocation for Wellbeing Services of £2.62 million per year.

Legal implications:

The Council has statutory duties under the Care Act 2014 to promote individual wellbeing and to take steps to prevent, reduce or delay the development of needs for care and support. The proposed Community Wellbeing Service for Older People, Physical Disability and Dementia contributes to the discharge of these duties by providing preventative support which helps maintain independence and wellbeing.

The Council also has a duty to consider the sustainability of the care and support market when exercising its functions under the Care Act 2014. The proposed commissioning approach seeks to support a sustainable VCSE market whilst securing value for money and continuity of preventative services for Kent residents.

KCC also has a statutory duty to improve the health of the population and reduce health inequalities (Health and Social Care Act 2012).

Equalities implications:

An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been completed. The assessment considered the potential impact of the proposed commissioning approach on people with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. The assessment confirmed that the proposed service promotes equitable access to care and support, supports fair and consistent decision-making, and mitigates the risk of disparities in service delivery across different localities in Kent.

Particular consideration has been given to older people, disabled people and people living with dementia, who are among the primary beneficiaries of the service. No adverse impacts have been identified that cannot be mitigated through service design, procurement and contract management arrangements.

The providers are required to work with the Council to undertake an annual review of the EqIA for the Community Wellbeing Service for Older People, Physical Disability and Dementia and demonstrate how they are delivering the recommendations identified by the EqIA to ensure the needs of populations with protected characteristics are met in the service the providers deliver. This will include making reasonable adjustments to make services accessible and tailored to meet different needs. Equality data will also need to be captured by the providers as part of the performance management of the contract.

Data Protection implications:

A Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) has been started and will be updated with any information required as the recommissioning process progresses. The providers will also be required to undertake a Data Protection Impact Assessment during mobilisation and support the completion of KCC's Data Protection Impact Assessment.

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation: The proposed decision was considered by the Adult Social Care and Public Health Cabinet Committee on 24 September 2026 and the recommendations were endorsed.

Any alternatives considered and rejected:

Option 1 Do nothing / allow contract to expire

This would risk non-compliance with the Council's statutory duties and remove a key part of the Council's prevention offer increasing the demand on statutory adult social care services.

Option 2 Bring service in-house

While an in-house offer could provide greater direct control, it would require significant investment, workforce recruitment, infrastructure and operational capacity. It could also reduce VCSE sector capacity, flexibility and community reach.

Option 3 Re-procure as three standalone services with separate contracts

Not recommended for older people, dementia and physical disability services, as separate contracts could create confusing referral routes, duplication and hand-offs for people with overlapping needs.

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

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Signed

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Date