

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:

The Leader of the Council

DECISION NUMBER:

26/00039

Executive Decision – Key Decision

26/00039 - Extension of Domestic Abuse Act Framework and associated services

Decision:

As Leader of the Council, I agree to:

- 1. APPROVE** extension and update of the framework arrangements, to reflect consolidated funding arrangements, set out in the report for ongoing management of the DA Act Funding 2027-29.
- 2. APPROVE** the extension of Kent Integrated Domestic Abuse Service (KIDAS) including Referral, Assessment and Triage service and services delivered under contract SS 16041 up until 31 January 2028 (10 months).
- 3. APPROVE** the extension of Safe Accommodation Support Service (SASS) contract SC 220255 up until 31 January 2028 (10 months).
- 4. DELEGATE** authority to the Director of Public Health to, in consultation with the Leader, Corporate Director for Finance, Corporate Director for Adult Social Care and Corporate Director for Children, Young People and Education, to revise and update the Domestic Abuse Framework as necessary to reflect the consolidated Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse Grant funding arrangements, and to make minor operational amendments, provided these remain within scope of the approved Framework criteria, associated grant terms and the council's statutory duties.
- 5. DELEGATE** authority to the Director of Public Health to, in consultation with the Corporate Director for Adult Social Care and Corporate Director for Children, Young People and Education, where applicable depending on affected portfolios, to administer any further Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse 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.
- 6. DELEGATE** authority to the Director of Public Health, in consultation with the Chief Executive, to take all necessary actions to implement this decision, including but not limited to negotiating, finalising the terms of and entering into contracts or other legal agreements, and to approve variations to existing contracts (including

KIDAS and SASS) to incorporate additional or enhanced activity, subject to the securing of additional external funding.

Reasons for decision:

Extension of Domestic Abuse Act (DA Act) Framework - The Domestic Abuse Framework (originally approved under Key Decision 23/00060 and extended under Key Decision 25/00033) is currently in place until March 2027. It provides the governance structure for determining the allocation and use of Domestic Abuse Duty Safe Accommodation grant funding, as well as supporting strategic and operational decision-making. MHCLG has now confirmed multi-year settlements through the Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse Grant which is consolidating multiple funding streams including what was the Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Grant.

Extending the Framework to align with the duration of the Grant (to March 2029), and updating it to reflect the consolidated funding requirements, will:

- Ensure continued compliance with the Grant conditions and statutory duties under Part 4 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021,
- Enable longer-term strategic planning and commissioning,
- Support delivery of the Kent & Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy 2024–2029,
- Provide flexibility to respond to changing need within the parameters set by MHCLG.

Extension of Kent Integrated Domestic Abuse Service (KIDAS) and Safe Accommodation Support Service (SASS) - KCC have services delivering support to survivors of domestic abuse which are due to end 31 March 2027:

- Kent Integrated Domestic Abuse Service (KIDAS) including:
 - Referral, Assessment and Triage (RAT) service, delivered countywide by a partnership arrangement, through a contract held by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner. The cost of this element is met in full by the OPCC as their financial contribution to the integrated service model.
 - Contract SS16041, delivered countywide by Oasis Domestic Abuse Service, Clarion Housing group and Look Ahead Care and Support Ltd.
- Safe Accommodation Support Service (SASS) SC220255

Commissioners are progressing the recommissioning of domestic abuse support services and the proposed development of the new Kent Integrated Family Domestic Abuse Service (KIFDAS), which will bring together multiple funding streams, services, and activities (including KIDAS and SASS) into a single, coordinated service, aligned under one contractual framework. The transition from existing service arrangements to the proposed KIFDAS model is complex and critical to get right. A well-managed transition is essential to ensure continuity of support for victims and their children, minimise operational disruption, and maintain safeguarding arrangements.

Given the complexity and in response to feedback from partner agencies during engagement activities, the extension of existing contracts, until 31 January 2028, is necessary to ensure successful procurement and mobilisation of the new contractual

arrangements, without creating any disruption to service delivery. The additional time will also support multiple partners (up to 15) to collaboratively shape a strong, sustainable funding model that reflects shared responsibilities and long-term system priorities for KIFDAS.

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

The extension of the DA Framework and proposed extension of the KIDAS and SASS contracts supports the delivery of a safer, more resilient Kent and contributes directly to the council’s ambitions for prevention, partnership working, financial sustainability, and system reform as set out in Reforming Kent 2025 – 2028, Our Council Strategy.

Financial implications:

The total cost for the proposed extension of the Domestic Abuse Act Framework across 2027-28 and services for the period 1 April 2027 to 31 January 2028 is £6,457,376.79. This is met by the councils Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse Grant allocation and partnership funding arrangements for the KIDAS contract, broken down as follows:

| Element | Period Covered | Total Amount (£) | Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse Grant (£) | Partner Funding (£) | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|--|----------------------------|----------------------|
| Extension of Domestic Abuse Framework | 1.4.27 – 31.3.28 | £5,197,005.52. | £5,197,005.52. | £0 | |
| Extension of KIDAS (SS16 041) | 1.4.27 – 31.1.28 | £3,371,251.25 | £2,110,879.98 (included in DA Framework amount above) | £1,260,371.27 | |
| Extension of SASS (SC220 255) | 1.4.27 – 31.1.28 | £572,090.95 | £572,090.95 (included in DA Framework amount above) | £0 | |
| TOTAL COST | | | £5,197,005.52 | £1,260,371.27 | £6,457,376.79 |

The Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse Grant allocation is confirmed through the Local Government Finance Settlement. The council has already accepted this funding as part of its approved budget setting process. This decision therefore relates to the governance, allocation and use of that funding rather than its acceptance.

Extension of Domestic Abuse Framework - The cost of implementing the Domestic Abuse Framework across 2027-29 will be met in full by Homelessness,

Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse Grant funding, including unspent grant funding from previous years (held in reserves). A draft budget forecast for 2027-28 indicates that expenditure will be £5,197,005.52. This figure includes funding for key service delivery, including:

- £2,110,879.98 for services delivered by the Kent Integrated Domestic Abuse Service (KIDAS) until 31 January 2028; and
- £572,090.95 for the Safe Accommodation Support Service (SASS), until 31 January 2028.

Actual activity and spend may be reprofiled to meet the changing needs and demand of people who have experienced domestic abuse, in line with the findings of the needs assessment and strategy commitments, providing all revised proposals meet the Framework criteria.

- **Extension of KIDAS** – Delivery of the countywide KIDAS Referral, Assessment and Triage Service is provided through the OPCC's Kent and Medway victim support contract. The cost of this element is met in full by the OPCC as their financial contribution to the integrated service model. The OPCC has confirmed that this arrangement can continue for the duration of the proposed KIDAS extension.

The full cost to extend the KIDAS contract (SS16 041) for 10 months from 1 April 2027 to 31 January 2028 is £3,371,251.25. Of this total, £2,110,879.98 is funded from within the Domestic Abuse Framework allocation set out above. The remaining balance is met through existing KIDAS funding partner contributions, including Public Health Grant funding*, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, Kent Fire and Rescue, the Integrated Care Board, and district and borough councils (Ashford, Canterbury, Dartford, Dover, Folkestone and Hythe, Gravesham, Maidstone, Swale and Thanet). This blended funding arrangement ensures that the full cost of the extension is met without creating any additional pressure on KCC's base budget. Extending the existing services by until 31 January 2028, will not result in any additional financial pressure for the council and will not draw on KCC base budget.

* This Public Health contribution is fully supported by the relevant Director and Cabinet Member

- **Extension of SASS** - The costs to extend the SASS contract (SC220 255) for 10 months from 1 April 2027 until 31 January 2028, is £572,090.95. This amount is included within the overall Domestic Abuse Framework allocation set out above and will be met in full by the Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse Act Grant.

Legal implications:

The council must comply with the statutory duties set out in the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 and relevant procurement legislation related to the extension of the contracts which is set out at Confidential Appendix C. The council must also have regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty in the Equality Act 2010.

Equalities implications:

Domestic Abuse Framework - An Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been undertaken and identified no direct equalities implications arising from this decision. Specific service arrangements made via the Framework will incorporate necessary equality consideration as part of Officer level decision-making.

Extension of KIDAS and SASS - EQIAs have been completed around the extension of KIDAS and SASS and identified no direct equalities implications arising from this decision.

Data Protection implications:

KIDAS and SASS both have Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIAs) in place, which have been completed and approved in line with UK GDPR requirements. As part of the recommissioning of services existing DPIAs will be refreshed to reflect the proposed new service model.

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

The proposed decision will be considered at the Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee on 2 July 2026.

Any alternatives considered and rejected:

- **Option 1: Do Nothing - Allow Framework and contracts to end without extension.** This option has been rejected as it risks a failure to meet statutory duties under the Domestic Abuse Act and service disruption to victims of domestic abuse, including adults and children.
- **Option 2: Immediate Recommissioning – Extend Framework and proceed with immediate procurement of proposed KIFDAS prior to full financial and organisational stability.** This option has been rejected as it risks the proposed codesigned KIFDAS model not being achievable within the funding envelope, further risking a poor market response, reduced value for money and service disruption caused by insufficient mobilisation period.
- **Option 3: Extend Framework, KIDAS and SASS services** - This is the proposed option to be progressed as it maintains continuity and compliance, supports strategic alignment and co-production and enables robust procurement and mobilisation.

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

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Signed

Date