

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:

The Leader of the Council

DECISION NUMBER:

26/00047

Executive Decision – Key Decision

26/00047 - Commissioning of an Integrated Domestic Abuse Programme (including KIFDAS and SAFER)

Decision:

The Leader of the Council is asked to:

APPROVE the procurement and award of:

- Kent Integrated Family Domestic Abuse Service (KIFDAS) (contract number CN260248) - Three-year and six-month contract, 1 August 2027 to 31 January 2031, with three optional 24-month extensions;
- Sanctuary Access For Eligible Residents (SAFER) Scheme (contract number CN260173) - Four-year and four month contract, 1 August 2027 to 30 November 2030, with three optional 24-month extensions;

APPROVE the continuation of partnership working arrangements with the KIFDAS funding partners to support the delivery of KIFDAS

DELEGATE authority to the Director of Public Health to implement the procurement process for the KIFDAS and SAFER services, and to negotiate, finalise and enter into contracts or other legal agreements, including a refreshed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with relevant partners, to deliver KIFDAS

DELEGATE authority to the Director of Public Health, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Environment, Coastal Regeneration and Public Health to exercise relevant contract extensions

DELEGATE authority to the Director of Public Health, 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 KIFDAS and SAFER) to incorporate additional or enhanced activity, subject to the securing of additional external funding.

Reasons for decision:

Domestic abuse is a cross-cutting issue. KCC has statutory duties under Part 4 of the Domestic Abuse (DA) Act 2021 to assess need, publish a strategy, and commission support for victims and their children residing in safe accommodation. The Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse Grant supports delivery of these duties.

Key services to support survivors of domestic abuse are the Kent Integrated Domestic Abuse Service (KIDAS) and Safe Accommodation Support Service (SASS). Both contracts have been extended under Key Decision 26/00039 and are due to end 31 January 2028. These contracts form key delivery mechanisms of the Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy and associated Domestic Abuse Framework, and are primarily funded through external grant funding, including the Domestic Abuse Act Grant and wider partnership contributions.

In addition, the contract for the council's Sanctuary Access for Eligible Residents (SAFER) Scheme, which provides targeted security measures to enable victims to remain safely in their own homes is due to expire on 30 November 2027. This includes a Cyber Sanctuary offer to strengthen the support available to victims experiencing online abuse, stalking, monitoring, harassment, coercive control and other forms of digital harm. SAFER forms a key component of the wider system, supporting prevention, early intervention, and demand management across accommodation-based services.

Commissioners commenced planning and undertaking recommissioning activity in 2024 to ensure continuity of service provision beyond the expiry of the current contracts and to inform the development of future domestic abuse services across Kent. This included exploring opportunities to improve service integration, reduce duplication, increase efficiency, and maximise the impact of available resources whilst improving outcomes for victims and survivors.

The proposed programme delivers a single coordinated domestic abuse system across Kent, and comprises two connected components:

1. **Kent Integrated family Domestic Abuse Service (KIFDAS)** – providing referral, triage, training, education, awareness, safe accommodation support and community-based domestic abuse support.
2. **Sanctuary Access For Eligible Residents (SAFER) Scheme** – providing specialist security measures and Cyber Sanctuary support to enable victims to remain safely in their own homes.

Award and mobilisation for both contracts will commence from summer 2027. Whilst procured through separate contracts, these services will operate as a single domestic abuse support system, sharing pathways, referral routes and strategic outcomes.

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

The proposed models directly support the priorities set out in the Council's Strategic Statement, Reforming Kent (2025–2028). Reforming Kent sets out the Council's ambition to deliver more integrated, preventative, and outcomes-focused services.

Together, the Kent Integrated Family Domestic Abuse Service (KIFDAS) and the Sanctuary Access for Eligible Residents (SAFER) Scheme form a coordinated domestic abuse programme that strengthens prevention, early intervention, and support for victims and their children across Kent. The programme will deliver a more integrated and whole-system approach to domestic abuse by bringing together safe

accommodation support, community-based support, workforce development, training, education, awareness raising, and targeted security interventions through a connected service model.

By reducing fragmentation, improving access to support, and strengthening the coordination of services, the programme will improve outcomes for residents, help people remain safe and independent within their communities where appropriate, and reduce demand on wider public services. The proposed approach aligns with the council's commitment to delivering joined-up, preventative services that achieve better outcomes and make best use of available resources.

Financial implications:

The total cost to implement this decision is £50,448,818.91, broken down as follows:

Service / Element	KIFDAS (£)		SAFER (£)
	i. Referral Hub	ii TEA and iii Integrated delivery of safe accommodation and community-based support	
2027-2028	35,000.00	1,281,666.67	220,000.00
2028-2029	210,000.00	4,693,937.78	421,050.00
2029-2030	210,000.00	4,733,002.78	424,207.88
2030-2031	210,000.00	4,772,458.43	427,389.43
2031-2032	210,000.00	4,812,308.64	430,594.85
2032-2033	210,000.00	4,852,557.35	433,824.32
2033-2034	210,000.00	4,893,208.54	437,078.00
2034-2035	210,000.00	4,934,266.25	440,356.08
2035-2036	210,000.00	4,975,734.53	443,658.75
2036-2037	175,000.00	4,185,055.41	446,986.19
2037-2038	0	0	299,477.03
TOTAL per Service / Element	1,890,000.00	44,134,196.37	4,424,622.55
TOTAL	50,448,818.91		

The costs associated with implementing this decision are anticipated to be met through a combination of the Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse Grant, Public Health Grant and partner contributions. This decision will not draw on the council's base budget.

The maximum contractual value associated with this decision is £50,448,818.91, over the full potential contract terms, including all extension periods. Actual expenditure may vary depending on final contract awards, funding partner

arrangements and the exercise of extension options, but will not exceed this amount without further approval in accordance with the council's governance requirements.

Funding allocations are currently confirmed for a defined period, with future grant allocations and partner contributions remaining subject to future Government funding announcements, partner budget-setting processes and governance approvals. Appropriate contract management, financial monitoring and governance arrangements will be in place to ensure service delivery is managed within the funding available.

Additional externally funded services may be incorporated into the KIFDAS and SAFER contracts during their lifetime to address identified gaps in provision and respond to emerging need. Any such additions will be fully funded through external grants or partner contributions and will be implemented in accordance with the Procurement Act 2023 and Spending the Council's Money requirements.

This decision comprises of the KIFDAS Referral Hub and two interdependent contracts which together deliver Kent's integrated domestic abuse programme:

- **KIFDAS - Referral Hub:**
 - Forms the central access and triage function within the KIFDAS model and will be delivered through partnership arrangements with the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC).
 - The partnership arrangements will commence on 1 February 2028 and are expected to continue for a period of up to nine years, subject to the continuation of partner funding, governance arrangements and relevant approvals.
 - The total value of the Referral Hub arrangements over the maximum duration of 9 years is £1,890,000.00
- **Kent Integrated Family Domestic Abuse Service (KIFDAS)**
 - Contract term: 3-year 6-month contract, inclusive of a mobilisation period, plus 3 x 24-month extension periods (9-year 6-month total maximum term) Extension subject to performance review and funding availability.
 - The total maximum cost over the maximum duration of nine years and six months is £44,134,196.37, inclusive of mobilisation costs.
 - KCC Public Health Grant will be used to fund this contract (£590,000pa) this contribution is fully supported by the relevant Director and Cabinet Member. The rest will be met in full by the Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse Grant and partnership funding contributions.
- **Sanctuary Access For Eligible Residents (SAFER) Scheme**
 - Contract term: 4-year 4-month contract, inclusive of a mobilisation period, plus 3 x 24-month extension periods (10-year 4-month total maximum term). Extension subject to performance review and funding availability.
 - The total maximum cost over the maximum duration of ten years and four months is £4,424,622.55, inclusive of mobilisation costs. This will

be met in full by KCC via the Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse Grant.

Legal implications:

The proposed commissioning of both the Kent Integrated Family Domestic Abuse Service (KIFDAS) and the Sanctuary Access for Eligible Residents (SAFER) Scheme will be undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the Procurement Act 2023, ensuring a compliant, transparent, and competitive procurement process.

The council must comply with its statutory duties set out in the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.

The council must also have regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty, set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 which requires public authorities, in the exercise of their functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it includes, as relevant, the need to:

- Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic; and
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it.

A Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) is also required in order to ensure appropriate compliance with data protection legislation.

Equalities implications:

Kent Integrated Family Domestic Abuse Service (KIFDAS) - An Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) has been undertaken in relation to the procurement of the Kent Integrated Family Domestic Abuse Service (KIFDAS) to consider the potential impact of the proposed commissioning approach on individuals and groups with protected characteristics, including those disproportionately affected by domestic abuse, such as women, children and young people, disabled people, and individuals from minority ethnic communities. The EQIA recognised that some groups may experience barriers to accessing services or could be disproportionately affected by changes to service delivery arrangements. Mitigating actions have been incorporated into the commissioning approach and service design. The assessment identified that the proposed model is expected to have an overall positive impact, by improving access to support, strengthening early intervention, and delivering a more consistent and integrated service offer across Kent.

Sanctuary Access for Eligible Residents (SAFER) Scheme - An Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) has been undertaken in relation to the recommissioning of the Sanctuary Access for Eligible Residents (SAFER) Scheme. SAFER is expected to have a positive equalities impact, particularly for groups disproportionately affected by domestic abuse, by enabling victims and their children to remain safely in their own homes where appropriate. This supports a more accessible and less disruptive pathway to safety, including for individuals who may face barriers to relocating to refuge accommodation, such as those with disabilities, larger families, or strong local ties.

Data Protection implications:

New Data Protection Impact Assessments have been drafted for KIFDAS and SAFER and both will be finalised with Providers during service mobilisation.

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

The Council's Consultation and Engagement Team was consulted and concluded that a formal public consultation was not required. The recommissioning proposals have been informed through extensive engagement with survivors, providers, funding partners and wider stakeholders.

The proposed decision will be considered at the Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee on 22 September 2026.

This version of the PROD is included in the agenda pack for committee members to review ahead of the meeting.

Any alternatives considered and rejected:

- **Option 1: Do nothing / decommission services - Allow the current KIDAS, SASS and SAFER contracts to expire with no replacement model** and begin decommissioning of services. This option was dismissed as it would result in the loss of statutory provision and result in the inability to utilise secured external grant funding, leading to significant financial and service impacts. This option would also create significant safeguarding risks and service gaps and leave victims/survivors without support.
- **Option 3: Develop and commission an expanded integrated service –** Including wider community support (including for children) and broader provision beyond current scope. This option was desirable however dismissed as it requires additional funding beyond the current financial envelope and is not currently deliverable or sustainable within confirmed resources.
- **Option 4: Recommission Existing Model (KIDAS / SASS / SAFER as is) -** Reprocare or extend services on a like-for-like basis, retaining the current KIDAS structure, separate SASS and SAFER contracts, existing service boundaries, and delivery approaches. This option was considered as it would provide continuity and minimise service disruption. However, it was discounted as it would not address the key issues identified through needs assessment, performance

review, and stakeholder engagement. In particular, the existing model reflects a fragmented system, with separate services and pathways for adults and children and variation in access and delivery. Option 4 would also not fully reflect changes in statutory duties under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, nor enable the development of a more coordinated, whole-family, and preventative approach. As a result, this option was not considered sufficient to meet future demand or deliver improved outcomes.

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

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Signed	Date