

**From: Sue Chandler, Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services**

**Matt Dunkley CBE, Corporate Director of Children, Young People and Education**

**To: Children's and Young People's Cabinet Committee – 18 November 2020**

**Subject: The Provision of Supported Lodgings and Staying Put Accommodation for Children and Young People aged 16-21 years (or up to 25 if in further education) Update Report**

**Key decision – Decision taken 1 April 2020 - Overall service value exceeds £1m and affects more than two Electoral Decisions**

**Classification: Unrestricted**

**Past Pathway of report: Decision Number and Title – 20/00022 - Supported Lodgings for Young People Leaving Care**

**Future Pathway of report: N/A**

**Electoral Division: all**

**Summary:** To provide a progress update to the Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee on transferring the Supported Lodgings Service in-house which was previously a commissioned service, managed by Catch22.

**Recommendation(s):**

The Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and note the contents of this report.

**1. Introduction**

1.1 The Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee considered the recommendation to transfer the Supported Lodgings Service in-house at its meeting on 11 March 2020.

1.2 Following discussion, a proposed revision was made to the original recommendation and the following is detailed in the Record of Decision.

**“Proposed decision as recommended by Cabinet Committee:**

As Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services, I propose to;

A) Agree to the continuation of Supported Lodgings and Staying Put accommodation for Children and Young People aged 16-21 years (or up

to 25 if in further education) through a change of delivery from contracted provision to being managed in-house

- B) Agree to a short extension of 6 months to the current contract that expires on 31 May 2020 to enable the changes to take place; and
- C) Delegate decisions about the establishment of the new service to the Corporate Director of Children, Young People and Education, or other Officer as instructed by the Corporate Director of Children, Young People and Education, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services.

### **Cabinet Member response:**

While the intention to deliver the changes within six months remains, I am satisfied that it remains appropriate to allow additional contingency time to ensure the transition from contracted arrangements to in-house service delivery can be implemented in the best way possible. In particular, I am mindful of the impact the COV-19 epidemic may have on a range of services, organisations and individuals. In reaching this view, I have considered the formal comments of the Cabinet Committee and the response of the Corporate Director, which is detailed in the decision report.”

- 1.3 Officers have been working towards the original timescale of “no more than nine months” from the end date of the contract with Catch22 (31 May 2020) and are reporting on progress through this report, as requested by the Cabinet Committee Members on 11 March 2020.
- 1.4 The service is for the provision of accommodation and support to children in care and young people who are care leavers aged 16-21 years old (or up to 25 if in further education.). The young people in this service are living with a family (hosts) in their home, with their own bedroom, and receive support delivered by the hosts to develop practical skills and emotional stability, with the aim to achieve living independently.
- 1.5 The annual contract value for this service was £335,976 for management costs and approximately £1.9 million for support costs/rent, which varies each year as is based on demand.
- 1.6 This paper outlines the key actions taken to date and confirms the final date of transfer.

## **2. Background**

- 2.1 Due to the nature of the work required, very limited actions could be taken prior to the final Decision being taken. Therefore, planning could only commence after the Cabinet Committee meeting in March, which was very shortly before the Covid-19 lockdown commenced. The progress to date is as follows:

- Establishment of Project Team

- Proposed roles defined with comparison against existing structures
- Met with Catch22 to establish working patterns, job descriptions and terms and conditions of TUPE eligible staff
- Identified, scoped and logged system changes to load Hosts for seamless payment transition – changes underway
- Developed the Data Protection Impact Assessment and Equality Impact Assessment
- Developed Service Agreement with Hosts and Host Handbook
- Mapping required processes for recruiting, assessing and on-boarding new Hosts
- Established pricing structure to align with in-house Foster Care payments process
- Detailed and documenting service expectations and accommodation standards
- Communicated with Catch22 staff directly and the Hosts on progress made; all have all been written to and a staff meeting was held virtually on 23 September 2020
- Each member of Catch22 staff has had the opportunity for an individual formal TUPE meeting with the Assistant Director for Corporate Parenting and KCC Human Resources
- A virtual meeting will be held with all Hosts early December 2020
- Hosts have been asked to confirm they want to transfer to KCC and provide details to update DBS checks
- Contract extension agreed with Catch22 for a further two months past November 2020 to the end of January 2021

## 2.2 Next Steps include:

- Ongoing communication to Hosts, Catch22 staff and our own staff group
- New arrangements to be in place from 1 February 2021. The immediate focus is to load the Hosts details to all relevant KCC systems so that they can be paid promptly, with a seamless transition
- DBS checks underway, outcomes reviews and appropriate actions taken to approve Hosts accordingly
- The Project Plan will continue to be closely monitored to ensure all actions are completed
- Recruitment to two posts which will not be filled by existing Catch22 staff.

## 3. Financial Implications

3.1 The proposed service will be funded by using existing monies for the service, being £336k for management fees and £1.9m for placement fees.

3.2 The contract was structured to separate the support and rent payments (placement fees) from the management fee. The placement fees paid to the hosts would continue with some recognition to bring in-line annual increases with in-house Foster Carers going forward. The management fee of £336k would be utilised to enhance and improve all accommodation-based support services in KCC and could make a difference to all young people aged 16+.

- 3.3 Supported Lodgings is dependent on the ability to recruit hosts and the same issues faced by Foster Carer recruitment are also experienced in Supported Lodgings. It is KCC's aim to reduce its use of semi-independent accommodation and expand Supported Lodgings. The proposal for managing Supported Lodgings in-house was part of a wider plan to reduce the use of semi-independent provision by improving the support offer to young people and the service providers (hosts).
- 3.4 Officers are continually reviewing costs to make sure that the new service does not exceed the value of the management fee to Catch22.

#### **4. Legal implications**

- 4.1 TUPE does apply and KCC's Human Resources colleagues are managing the requirements to make sure the legal obligations to KCC and Catch22 staff are observed. Significant progress has been made.
- 4.2 KCC has a statutory duty to provide suitable and safe accommodation that has the right level of support for Children in Care up to the age of 18 years in accordance with the Children Act 1989. The 2010 (revised January 2015) regulations set out under Volume 3 of the Children Act 1989 (Planning Transition to Adulthood for Care Leavers) have strengthened an emphasis on leaving care as being a transitional period rather than something that occurs at a particular point in time. Care leavers are expected to receive support from their responsible authority (the Local Authority that last looked after them) up to their 25th birthday if they so wish and are eligible. The aim of such continuing support is to ensure that young people who are care leavers are provided with comprehensive personal support so that they achieve their potential as they make the transition to adulthood.
- 4.3 Applying corporate parenting principles to looked-after children and care leavers (February 2018): This guidance is for local authorities and their 'relevant partners' (as defined in section 10 of the Children Act 2004) and others who contribute to services provided to looked-after children and care leavers. It promotes young people being safe and having stability which includes the need to maintain, as far as possible, consistency in the home environment, relationships with carers and professionals and school placement. For some care leavers, it may involve supporting a Staying Put arrangement where care leavers and their former foster carers wish to remain living together after the young person reaches the age of 18. It may also mean wider support to help care leavers navigate the inevitable challenges of moving to independence through early preparation, good planning, securing a range of housing options and maintaining relationships with those whose continued support they might want or need during their transition to adulthood.

#### **5. Equalities implications**

- 5.1 The people most likely to be impacted by changes to this service are the recipients of the current service and their host families. However, the young people themselves are unlikely to experience a change in host family, unless the host family does not want to work under the new KCC management arrangements, and the decision may be that the young person needs to move.

Consultation with hosts has evidenced that there is a positive response to host providers transferring to be supported by KCC. Overall, the positive impact is likely to outweigh the negative as the service will be more integrated with the KCC offer for smoother transition through other services into independence.

- 5.2 The EQIA will be expanded to cover the impact on staff as part of any future consultation.

## **6. Other corporate implications**

- 6.1 Officers are in discussion with Cantium Business Services regarding the impact of change on their commissioned services with increased payment activity.

## **7. Governance**

- 7.1 The Key Decision has been taken and the implementation has oversight and ownership from Matt Dunkley, Corporate Director for Children, Young People & Education, and Sarah Hammond, Director of Integrated Children's Services East.

## **8. Conclusion**

- 8.1 Significant progress has been made in implementing the Key Decision taken in April 2020. This has resulted in an expected transfer date of 1 February 2021. All activities are on track; the one main consideration is for the new staff transferring to KCC and their associated anxieties of leaving a company that has served them well for many years.

## **9. Recommendation(s):**

- 9.1 The Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and note the contents of this report.

## **10. Background Documents**

- 10.1 The Decision report, Record of Decision and associated documents for decision 20/00022 - Supported Lodgings for Young People Leaving Care, taken on 1 April 2020 (following Cabinet Committee 11 March 2020) can be found here: [Decision 20-00022 Supported Lodgings](#)

## **11. Contact details**

### **Report Author(s):**

Christy Holden  
Lead Commissioning Manager Children's  
03000 415356  
[Christy.holden@kent.gov.uk](mailto:Christy.holden@kent.gov.uk)

Caroline Smith

### **Relevant Director:**

Sarah Hammond  
Director for Integrated Children's  
Services  
03000 411488  
[Sarah.hammond@kent.gov.uk](mailto:Sarah.hammond@kent.gov.uk)

Assistant Director for Corporate  
Parenting  
03000 415091  
[Caroline.smith@kent.gov.uk](mailto:Caroline.smith@kent.gov.uk)