

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TAKEN BY:

**Cabinet Member for
Adult Social Care and Public Health**

DECISION NO:

23/00074

For publication Yes

Key decision: Yes

Title of Decision: Property Security element of the countywide Sanctuary Access for Eligible Residents (SAFER) Scheme – Contract Award

Decision: As Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health, I agree to:

- a) **AWARD** the contract, to the successful bidder identified as part of the procurement process for the provision of the Property Security element of the countywide SAFER Scheme for a maximum of four years (initial two-year contract, 1 December 2023 to 30 November 2025, with two, one-year optional extension periods, subject to robust contract monitoring, from 1 December 2025 – 30 November 2026 and 1 December 2026 – 30 November 2027);
- b) **DELEGATE** authority to the Corporate Director Adult Social Care and Health, after consultation with the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health and the Corporate Director Finance, subject to robust contract monitoring to agree the relevant contract extensions as required; and
- 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.

Reason(s) for decision: The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 introduced new statutory duties to Local Authorities to assess need and commission services, to support survivors of domestic abuse (adults and children) residing in 'safe accommodation'. This includes refuges, Sanctuary Schemes, move-on and dispersed accommodation. Since 2021, the Department of Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC) has awarded £12.4m in new Grant funding to Kent County Council (KCC), to support implementation of these duties until 2025. A Sanctuary Scheme is a property where security measures have been installed, enabling survivors to remain in their own homes safely if they chose to do so. It also incorporates an element of specialist domestic abuse support to the individuals residing there.

A procurement exercise has been undertaken to identify suitable suppliers for the Property Security element in line with decision 23/00022. This decision seeks to award the contract to the successful bidder identified as part of the procurement process. It is proposed that the contract award will be October 2023, with a mobilisation period between October and November 2023 and full service go-live from 1 December 2023

The contract will be for a maximum of four years, 1 December 2023 to 30 November 2025 (initial two-year contract) with two, one-year optional extension periods, subject to robust contract monitoring from 1 December 2025 – 30 November 2026 and 1 December 2026 – 30 November 2027.

Financial Implications: The table below outlines the costs to KCC for the initial two years and extension options of the Property Security element of the SAFER Scheme, with the total contract value being £1,600,000.

	KCC Domestic Abuse Act funding
Initial two-year contract term	£800,000
Two, one-year optional extension periods	£800,000
Total (Initial two-year contract term PLUS Two, one-year optional extension periods)	£1,600,000

Legal Implications: The change in legislation in 2021, means that the council now has statutory duties to provide support to those residing in 'safe accommodation'. This includes adults and children. The Kent SAFER Scheme including the Property Security element will ensure the council meets its new duties under the DA Act. A procurement exercise was undertaken to identify suitable suppliers in accordance with PCR 2015 Regulation 32(2)(c) and Procurement Policy Note 01/20. The Strategic Commissioning Division used the standard Terms and Conditions of contract. There will need to be resource allocated at the end point contract award for contracts to be signed and sealed.

Equality Implications: An Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) has been completed, given that the SAFER Scheme is proposed to be a countywide service available to all survivors of domestic abuse, the EQIA did not identify any potential adverse effects of the proposal. This is a live document and will be developed further once the new service has been procured.

Data Protection Implications: The Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) and draft Privacy Notice have been completed to ensure the Property Security element of the countywide SAFER Scheme will be compliant with the Data Protection Act 2018. These documents will be updated once a provider is appointed to reflect their specific processing arrangements.

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation: The proposed decision was discussed at the Adult Social Care Cabinet Committee on 13 September 2023 and the recommendations were endorsed.

Any alternatives considered and rejected: As part of the procurement process the following options were considered and disregarded.

Option 1 - Do nothing. The Needs Assessment has shown that there is not a consistent offer of sanctuary across the county, resulting in an inequitable offer of support to survivors and their children. Doing nothing will not address this identified gap in services and therefore the council will not be meeting its statutory duties.

Option 2 – Delegate funding and responsibility for delivery of Property Security measures to district and boroughs across Kent and commission support for adult survivors residing in properties where measures have been applied. It is recognised that this would likely result in multiple procurements and the opportunity for efficiencies through collaborative commissioning would be lost. There would be 12 separate sanctuary offers across the county with separate referral routes, making pathways unclear for survivors and referrers.

Option 3 – Procure a Sanctuary Scheme (Property Security measures and support for adult survivors) for areas where there is not currently a provision in place only. (Canterbury,

Gravesham, Thanet, Dover, Sevenoaks, Tonbridge and Malling and Tunbridge Wells) It is recognised that this would likely result in 7 separate sanctuary offers across the county with separate referral routes, making pathways unclear for survivors and referrers. All offers would need to ensure a clear pathway for the provision of support for adults and new support service for children (due to be procured in April 2023) It is viewed that option 3 would be challenging to implement and deliver geographic equitability and the opportunity to achieve full efficiencies through collaborative commissioning would be lost.

Any interest declared when the decision was taken and any dispensation granted by the Proper Officer: None



29 September 2023

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signed

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date