

From: **Andrew Ireland, Corporate Director Social Care, Health and Wellbeing**

To: **Peter Oakford, Cabinet Member for Specialist Children's Services**

Decision Number **14/00088**

Subject: **Interim arrangements for Supported Lodging provision through a Single Tender Action**

Key Decision **Affects more than 2 Electoral Divisions. Expenditure of more than £1m**

Classification **Unrestricted**

Electoral Division **All**

Summary: Accommodation provision is a key part of the integration of Children in Care and Care Leavers service. As such we are focussing on expanding provision to support the drive towards sufficiency. We are proposing to enter into an interim contract with the current provider, Catch22 to deliver increased Supported Lodging requirements over the next nine months. During this time we will be undertaking a fully competitive procurement process.

Recommendations: The Cabinet Member for Specialist Children's Services is asked to agree to initiate Single Tender Action interim arrangements with Catch22 to provide increased and diversified provision for the next nine months by taking a formal key decision.

1. Introduction

- a) Kent County Council currently manages accommodation for older Children in Care and Care Leavers through a range of mechanisms. The Service for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (SUASC) has contracts with some housing providers providing independent living, Supporting People provide elements of semi-independent and floating support to vulnerable young people and Catch22 manage a successful Supported Lodging Scheme

- b) Kent County Council have considered a range of actions to better coordinate and align the accommodation arrangements for our CIC and Care Leavers, however, market testing and engagement have not yielded positive results. It became apparent after the Meet the Market event in February that the model of brokerage would not be the most suitable model of service delivery at this time. Planned procurement was suspended and agreement was given to move the Supported Lodging provision back in-house on 1st October 2014, when the Catch22 contract expired.
- c) More recently, the intention to in-source has been reviewed as part of the Newton Europe diagnostic. As a result, we have moved to a position to actively seek to maintain the function external to KCC. We believe that this would not only lessen disruption for Supported Lodging hosts and young people, but could rapidly increase and diversify provision given the particular pressures on accommodation for young people aged 16 plus.

2. Key Decision and Governance Sign-Off

- a) On the 9th July 2014, the Children's Social Care and Health Cabinet Committee were asked to give their comment with regard to entering into an interim contract. Members asked for consideration to be made with regard to services offered by registered social landlords and the potential link to Supporting People. Members' comments on the issues relating to the provision of supported lodging interim arrangements were noted and will be used to inform a subsequent Cabinet Member decision
- b) Kent County Council have drawn up a Single Tender Action (STA) Memorandum, which sets out the recent history which has informed the proposal for interim arrangements and rationale for entering into arrangements with the current provider, Catch22. (Appendix 1)
- c) The STA also sets out the risks to the Local Authority by entering into a contract through non-competitive means. In summary, risk to the Local Authority by non-competitive contracting is mitigated by the fact that this relates to statutory services and therefore competition is not compulsory. In addition, 'special circumstances' may exist in that the full intention of the Council will be to tender for the Supported Lodging service immediately on letting of the contract.

3. Interim Model and Costings

- a) With the interim contract Kent County Council are proposing to move to a position where we:
- Specify the central costs
 - Move to a cost and volume model which can be flexible according to demand and availability
 - Introduce incentives for meeting stretch targets
 - Increase the number of supported lodging hosts to increase the range of options for young people and decrease the pressure on other accommodation provision (e.g. Independent Foster Care and residential care)
- b) The intention of the Council is for the provider to increase placements by the end of the nine month contract period. The indicative cost to deliver a total of 278 placements (excluding central costs) by the end of the contract would be £1,572,420. An increase of 89 Supported Lodging placements could save the Authority between £350,000 and £800,000 per year.

4. Recommendations

Recommendations: The Cabinet Member for Specialist Children's Services is asked to agree to initiate Single Tender Action interim arrangements with Catch22 to provide increased and diversified provision for nine months from 1st October 2014.

5. **Background Papers:** APPENDIX 1: Report detailing rationale for Single Tender Action required for Kent County Council Legal and Procurement in order to progress activity. July 2014

6. Contact details

Sue Mullin - Commissioning Manager, Strategic Commissioning Unit
sue.mullin@kent.gov.uk