

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TAKEN BY

Peter Oakford, Cabinet Member for Specialist Children's Services

DECISION NO.

15/00006

If decision is likely to disclose exempt information please specify the relevant paragraph(s) of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972

Subject: : Children's Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Services

Decision:

As Cabinet Member for Specialist Children's Services, I:

- 1) NOTE that the Clinical Commissioning Groups have already agreed to extend the contract for the mainstream Children and Young People Mental Health Service.
- 2) AGREE to extend the contracts for the Children in Care element of the Children and Young People Mental Health Service and for the Emotional Wellbeing Services for a year.
- 3) DELEGATE to the Corporate Director for Social Care, Health & Wellbeing, or other suitable officer, responsibility to implement this decision, including engaging with Service Providers to update the specifications to reflect feedback from practitioners and young people.

Any Interest Declared when the Decision was Taken: *None expected*

Reason(s) for decision, including alternatives considered and any additional information

In 2011, KCC and the then health commissioners agreed to jointly commission emotional wellbeing and mental health services due to evidence that an integrated system would improve outcomes for children and young people.

Subsequently the multi-agency Children's Health & Wellbeing Board has been overseeing the development of a joint Emotional Wellbeing Strategy and Delivery Plan. Extension of these contracts will maintain the joint commissioning approach and will enable the strategy and plan to be completed and the procurement of services along the new model.

Background Documents:

There will be a decision recommendation report from Corporate Director to Cabinet Member.

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

The 20 January 2015 Children's Social Care and Health Cabinet Committee considered the proposed decision and the recommendation report. Officers introduced the report and explained the rationale behind the decision. The committee discussed:

- a) the chance to review and remodel services was welcomed and, to start this, the County Council should first identify what was needed as part of the service. Responsibility for the service should move from NHS England to the County Council;
- b) Kent's Children in Care currently received a good Mental Health service, whereas it was seen that other young people did not, as there had been delays in accessing timely assessment and treatment from the mainstream service, so the recommendation to support and endorse the extension of contract did not have the universal support of the committee;

- c) the issue should remain on the committee's agenda for regular monitoring until the service was judged to be right. The issue should also be referred to the Health and Wellbeing Board for its attention;
- d) the County Council needed to take a robust stance with the Secretary of State about the difficulties of commissioning suitable services. The four tiers of service were delivered by four different providers. There should be a single, coherent, unified commissioning service for local authorities to work with. The Cabinet Member for Specialist Children's Services, Mr Oakford, undertook to write to the Secretary of State on behalf of the committee, and this offer was generally accepted. The Health Overview and Scrutiny had written to the Secretary of State in the past about the Children and Young People's Mental Health service, as part of the in-depth review of the service that it had been asked by this committee and the Corporate Parenting Panel to undertake; and
- e) although two speakers had expressed their lack of support for the recommendation in the report, it was pointed out that the proposed extension to the existing contract would allow more time for the challenges of the service to be worked through and for the service to be improved. The shortcomings of the service were well known and had been the subject of much past discussion at committee, and there was still much work to be done to address the historic lack of investment in the service. The consequences of not extending the contract were set out in the report, so there was no real alternative to supporting the extension and moving ahead with improvement work. Mr Wilson reminded Members that much work had been done to improve the performance of the service and waiting lists had been reduced, in line with the targets set out in the existing contract.

The recommendation set out in the report was then put to a vote and carried 11 votes to 2.

The committee resolved that the proposed decision to be taken by the Cabinet Member for Specialist Children's Services, to extend the Children in Care element of the mainstream Children and Young People Mental Health Service contract, and the Emotional Wellbeing Service contract, be endorsed, taking into account comments made by this committee.

Any alternatives considered:

To not extend the contracts and to re-procure the services independently of health partners. This will end the joint commissioning approach.

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

None



26 Feb 2015

signed

date

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Decision Referred to Cabinet Scrutiny			
YES		NO	

Cabinet Scrutiny Decision to Refer Back for Reconsideration			
YES		NO	

Reconsideration Record Sheet Issued			
YES		NO	

Reconsideration of Decision Published	