

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TAKEN BY:

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

DECISION NO:

15/00010

For publication

Key decision

Affects more than 2 Electoral Divisions and expenditure of more than £1m.

Subject: Supported Accommodation in a Family Environment Service for Older Children in Care and Care Leavers (previously known as the Proposal for the delivery of Supported Lodgings for Kent Care Leavers).

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

- a) **AWARD** a new contract to deliver Supported Accommodation in a Family Environment Service for Kent's Older Children in Care, Care Leavers and vulnerable people;
- b) **DELEGATE** authority to the Corporate Director of Social Care, Health and Wellbeing, or other nominated officer, to undertake the necessary actions to implement the decision.

Reason(s) for decision:

The original Supported Lodgings contract was developed as an interim solution during the integration of the 0-16 Children in Care, 16+ Care Leaver service and Service for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children. It was procured via a Single Source Action (SSA), running from 1st October 2014 – 31st June 2015.

In April 2015 Children's Social Care and Health Cabinet Committee were informed of the intention to extend arrangements with the current providers through a Single Source Action.

Subsequent legal advice identified that the existing contract could continue to operate without the need to formally extend through a SSA, on the basis that a formal procurement exercise was underway. A formal procurement exercise was commenced to meet legal requirements and maintain placement stability.

The service was procured through a competitive tender process to comply with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. The contract commenced on 1 June 2016.

A key premise of the service is that it provides a more cost effective alternative to other forms of supported placements such as adolescent foster care or spot purchased semi-independent placements. All eligible young people placed are claiming Housing Benefits.

The Council has a statutory duty to provide suitable and safe accommodation that has the right level of support for Children in Care in accordance with the Children's Act 1989.

The Council must provide Care Leavers with support and financial support to assist in promoting their welfare, especially in relation to maintaining suitable accommodation and promoting education and training.

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

This matter was discussed at the Children's Social Care and Health Cabinet Committee on 16 January 2017. Mrs K Sharp, Head of Public Health Commissioning, Mrs K Mills, Commissioning Manager (Specialist Children's Services Care Leavers), were in attendance for this item.

Mrs Sharp introduced the report which set out contractual matters relating to contract awards for both the delivery of Supported Accommodation in a Family Environment and another contractual matter.

Mrs Sharp then responded to the questions of the Committee Members, and made points including the following:

- A review is being undertaken to ensure that the process was now robust enough to ensure that contracts did not require retrospective approval
- an audit would be taking place which would provide Committee Members with assurance that there were no more contracts outstanding.
- The purpose of the contract was to ensure a smooth transition for those reaching the age of 18.

Mr Ireland then added the following points:

- There had been an error, which was why the Committee's approval was now being sought.

Mr Segurolo then added the following points:

- KCC Policy was not to put 16 or 17 year olds in to bed and breakfasts. Sometimes, this happened as an emergency temporary measure for those over the age of 18.

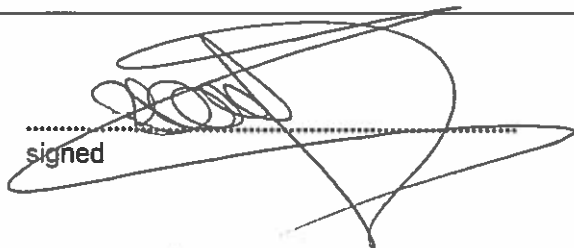
RESOLVED that the decision proposed to be taken by the Cabinet Member for Specialist Children's Services, as set out below, be endorsed.

- a) To award a new contract to deliver Supported Accommodation in a Family Environment (SAiFE) for Kent's Older Children in Care, Care Leavers and vulnerable young people.
- b) To delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Social Care, Health and Wellbeing, or other nominated officer, to undertake the necessary actions to implement the decisions.

Any alternatives considered:

None

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

.....
signed 

26-1-17
.....
date