

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:

Roger Gough,
Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and
Education

DECISION NO:

18/00013

Unrestricted

Subject: To Procure A New Contract For The Delivery Of Independent Adoption And Special Guardianship Order Support Services

Decision:

As Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education Cabinet I agree to:

- a) procure a new contract for Independent Adoption and Special Guardianship Order Support Services; and**
- b) Delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Children, Young People and Education, or other nominated officer, to undertake the necessary actions to implement the decision.**

Reason(s) for decision:

In taking this decision I have taken into consideration:

KCC's Independent Adoption and SGO Support Services have been outsourced for more than 10 years, and have previously been subject to 3 competitive tenders. The current provider is Barnardo's.

There are four individual elements to the overall contract and the following gives a brief description.

An independent support service to birth parents

To provide a support and counselling service to birth parents prior to an adoption taking place, where a child is (or children are) looked after by the Council, and for whom adoption has been identified as the permanency plan.

A service that provides access to birth records and intermediary services for adult adoptees

To assist adopted persons either adopted through the Council or who are resident in Kent, and who are aged 18 and over, to obtain information in relation to their adoption and to facilitate contact between such persons and their adult birth relatives.

Access to information and intermediary services for birth relatives and those with a prescribed relationship

To provide advice and support to birth relatives and those with a prescribed relationship aged 18 years and over, who require intermediary and counselling services and access to non-identifying information regarding their adoption.

In 2014 a change in legislation extended the provision of intermediary services to facilitate contact between persons with a prescribed relationship. This is defined as individuals who still have a relationship with the adoptee by blood, marriage or civil partnership.

Contact services (direct contact and letterbox contact)

To provide a direct and indirect contact service for children under the age of 18 who have been adopted or who are subject to a Special Guardianship Order and who have agreed contact with their birth relatives.

These are statutory services which all local authorities are required to make available for those meeting the relevant criteria.

Strategic Commissioning, on behalf of Specialist Children's Services, has undertaken a robust diagnostic analysis, market and stakeholder engagement to inform the future commissioning requirements for an Independent Adoption and Special Guardianship Support Service. The new contract will offer a range of statutory services for all those living in Kent (excluding Medway), who meet the requirements under the relevant legislation.

Financial Implications

These services are currently funded from the Specialist Children's Services Adoption budget. The current contract has a 4-year life value of £1,505,100.

As part of the commissioning and procurement of a new contract an alternative cost/pricing model will be applied that will link performance levels to payments made. Future demand has also been modelled showing reduced referral levels. This combination of reduced referrals and a pricing model more closely linked to the amount of activity delivered provides an opportunity for efficiencies of up to £15,000 to be made through the procurement process.

The full report will be presented to Children, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee on the 8th March and their recommendations will be set out below.

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

Any alternatives considered: All the alternatives will be presented to Children, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee on 8th March 2018.

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

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Signed

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Date