

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TAKEN BY:

Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health

DECISION NO:

19/00005

For publication

Key decision Affects more than 2 Electoral Divisions

Subject: ASSESSMENT AND REHABILITATION SERVICES FOR PEOPLE WITH SENSORY IMPAIRMENTS

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

- a) **IMPLEMENT** a new arrangement for the provision of statutory assessment and rehabilitation services for sight impaired adults, assessment and habilitation for sight impaired children and statutory equipment assessment and rehabilitation for hearing impaired older adults aged 65 years and over; and
- b) **DELEGATE** authority to the Corporate Director of Adult Social Care and Health, or other nominated officer, to undertake the necessary actions to implement the decision.

Reason(s) for decision: Kent County Council has a statutory responsibility under The Care Act (2014) to meet peoples assessed eligible needs, this includes specific duties related to people with sensory impairments. The proposal to implement new arrangements for the provision of these statutory assessment and rehabilitation services will allow for the development of a sensory operating model that is flexible, improves outcomes for people with sensory impairments and that can be aligned with other pathways across Adult Social Care and Health.

Financial Implications: Spend within the current contract is £1,162,472 per year

Legal Implications: Kent County Council has a statutory responsibility under The Care Act (2014) to meet peoples assessed eligible needs, this includes specific duties related to people with sensory impairments.

Equality Implications: An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed.

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation: The proposed decision was discussed at the Adult Social Care Cabinet Committee on 22 January 2019. Ms Palmer (Manager, Sensory Disabilities) and Ms Sheppard (Senior Commissioner) were in attendance for this item.

Mr Gibbens (Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health) reminded Members of the Committee that the Corporate Director of Adult Social Care and Health's portfolio included services for disabled children.

Ms Palmer introduced the report which set out the proposal to implement a single assessment and rehabilitation service for people with sensory impairment in Kent. This would improve outcomes for Kent residents through reducing duplication, improving quality and aligning support into clear pathways.

Ms Palmer and Ms Sheppard then responded to comments and questions from Members, including the following: -

- a) Ms Sheppard said that Kent County Council were working closely with Hi-Kent and Kent Association for the Blind (KAB) in relation to proposing to implement a single assessment and rehabilitation service for people with sensory impairment in Kent and developing a

more robust preventative offer. She talked about the focused engagements that had taken place in relation to Kent's community-based wellbeing services and the support that was in place for sensory impairment. Ms Tidmarsh reiterated Ms Sheppard's comments and confirmed that funding would not be retracted from the agencies that were undertaking the work.

- b) Ms Palmer said that the sensory team were hoping to recruit staff in the future that would have a particular focus on the rehabilitation and visual impairment rehabilitation of 18 to 25-year olds.
- c) Ms Palmer confirmed that Hi-Kent provided a hearing-aid maintenance support service to individuals that had been given hearing aids. She said that it was important to improve the communications that took place between Health and Social Care, and Hi-Kent and audiology departments to ensure that individuals received relevant information, advice and easy access to technology.
- d) Ms Southern said that it was crucial to ensure that Kent County Council's statutory responsibilities were met and expressed the importance of monitoring systems and managing impacts regularly. She said that the contribution from all of Kent County Council's wider sector was greatly valued and referred to the importance of close working relationships.
- e) Mr Gibbens (Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health) suggested that an update on the progress of the service be submitted to the Committee at a later date. Members of the Committee supported this.

RESOLVED that the decision proposed to be taken by the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health to:

- a) implement a new arrangement for the provision of statutory assessment and rehabilitation services for sight impaired adults, assessment and habilitation for sight impaired children and statutory equipment assessment and rehabilitation for hearing impaired older adults aged 65 years and over; and
- b) delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Adult Social Care and Health, or other nominated officer, to undertake the necessary actions to implement the decision,

be endorsed.

Any alternatives considered: None

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



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signed

5 FEBRUARY 2019

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date