

DECISION RECORD ¹

Officer Key Decisions are subject to the Council's Call-In Procedure (Annex 9 of the Council's Constitution <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/about-the-council/freedom-of-information-and-council-data/open-data-statistics-about-hertfordshire/who-we-are-and-what-we-do/who-we-are-and-what-we-do.aspx>)

Subject:

Single Tender Action for award of contracts for the provision of Early Intervention Child & Adolescent Mental Health (CAMHS) & Emotional Wellbeing Service for Children & Young People'

Staff Contact: **Deborah Sheppard**

Executive Member: **Teresa Heritage**

Tel: **01442 454224 / 01438 844686**
Comnet: **84224**

Portfolio: Children, Young People and Families

1. Decision

To sign off the single tender action to allow the direct award of a contract to the following providers:

- Rephael House
- Signpost and Youth Enquiry Service
- Youth Concern Trust
- Youth Talk Limited
- Kooth
- Step2

for the provision of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Early Intervention Services.

2. Reasons for the decision

Hertfordshire County Council, working in partnership with East and North Herts CCG and Herts Valleys CCG, went out to tender for the Children and Adolescents Mental Health Services "Early Intervention" services last year (2018) and two bids were submitted. However, during the initial stages of evaluation, it became clear there were issues with both bids and commissioners were not able to proceed to full evaluation of either bid. The tender process therefore had to be halted.

The existing contracts for the community based Early Intervention Services were extended to ensure continued provision of the services whilst the process of considering alternative options going forward were presented to CCGs/LA. The spread across the county continued, each provider having their own geographical area and CYP had services in place where they could best access them and not further affect their mental ill health. These contract extensions will expire on 30th September 2019. Due to the need to ensure a service will still be provided for the CYP of Hertfordshire it is the intention that the existing providers are awarded contracts for a further two (2) years until 30th September 2021, with the option to extend for a further six (6) months whilst further options are explored as described below.

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There is a recognition that our current CAMHS offer has some systemic issues that we need to address such as:

- **There is lots of good provision in Hertfordshire, but it is not co-ordinated and can be difficult to navigate for CYP and their parent/Carers.**
- **CYP can and do bounce between services.**
- **There is a need for more capacity.**

Providers across the system have been reporting and experiencing the impact of these systemic problems within services, this is contributing to extended wait times and more CYP with escalating issues and consequently needing a specialist intervention. This is creating pressure on existing providers and Children and Young People have to travel further to be able to access services which could cause their mental health issues to be exacerbated. Commissioners and Partners are currently reviewing options in terms of the Early Intervention Services going forward and are hopeful that we can move towards an Integrated Care System in which providers work together and are accountable for a system rather than just their own service. However, whilst work to achieve this is ongoing it is vital that we support the market, reduce commercial sensitivity and not de-stabilise existing providers, the system and CYP who are receiving services.

The Integrated Health and Care Commissioning Team have consulted with Hertfordshire County Councils Legal service who have provided the below in relation to the approval of this Single Tender Action:

“Legal Services has confirmed that the proposed direct award of the contracts is compatible with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. In particular, the Council may rely on the exemptions provided in Regulation 12 and/or Regulation 32.”

3. **Alternative options considered and rejected ²**

A tender process was undertaken in 2018 however this was not successful, and we were unable to award the contracts. The incumbent provider's contracts were extended whilst we considered our options. The decision to not go out to tender again was made due to the poor response previously and the current CAMHS system redesign.

The loss of service to CYP and their family/Carers, if we were unable to directly award would be considerable and could result in pressure on an already strained statutory social and health care services. The Single Tender Action for this period will allow us time to ensure that the suggested redesign is carefully planned and thought through with appropriate resource to support this.

4. **Consultation**

This approach has been agreed at various boards including:

- The Children and Young People's Emotional & Mental Wellbeing Board
- Herts Valleys CCG Commissioning Executive
- East and North Herts CCG Executive Board
- HCC Children's Services Core Board

(a) Comments of Executive Member

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No comments

(b) Comments of other consultees ³

All other consultees at the various boards agreed with the approach and supported the decision to ward directly via a Single Tender Action.

5. **Following consultation with, and the concurrence of the Executive Member, I am proceeding with the proposed decision.**

Signed:

Title: Date:

6. Copies of agreed document to:

- All consultees
- Chairman, and Vice-Chairmen of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- Hard & electronic copy available for public inspection both at County Hall and on www.hertfordshire.gov.uk Democratic Services - Room 213 County Hall. democratic.services@hertfordshire.gov.uk

¹ for guidance see Chief Legal Officer's note "Taking Decisions"

² details of any alternative options considered and rejected by the officer at the time the decision was made

³ If the matter has local significance, but no general significance for the Council and no controversial aspects, the officer shall consult or inform the local member in writing (or by e mail) and proceed. It is essential that all officers responsible for delivering services ensure that local members are kept well briefed on issues affecting their areas.