

Officer Decision Record – Executive Decision

If Key Decision: Decision Ref. No.

B181 /23

If not a Key Decision write n/a above

OFFICER DECISION RECORD ⁱ

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: The provision of Young Carers Services: Proposed award of contract

Type of Decision: Executive

Key Decision (Executive Functions only): Yes

Executive Member/Committee Chairman:

Portfolio (Executive Functions only): Children, young people and families

Officer Contact: Sally Orr

Tel: 01992 555680

1. Decision

Hertfordshire County Council's Children Services in collaboration with Public Health jointly commission the provision of a support service for Hertfordshire's young carers. This contract (HCC1810754) is currently held with Carers in Herts which comes to a natural end on 31 March 2024. This contract has been in place since 1 April 2019 until the 31 March 2022 and then extended for a further two years until 31 March 2024. Carers in Herts have provided services to young carers under contract since April 2015. Previous to this the young carers support element formed part of the Carers in Herts contract held with ACS (adult services).

HCC is seeking to direct award Carers in Herts a contract to continue to deliver the provision of support for young carers in Hertfordshire for the period of 1 April 2024 to the 31 March 2026.

The total contract value for the two-year period will be **£592,872**.

2. Reasons for the decision

Although the provision of young carers services are delivered under one contract this contract only forms part of the services delivered by Carers in Herts, who deliver all carer services within Adult Services. For a standalone contract this is less attractive to other suppliers to deliver on this one service area and so the cost of complying with a full tender process is unlikely to provide alternative provider options and benefits to HCC and improve outcomes for young carers. Carers in Herts also deliver carer services across adult services and having one provider to deliver all carer services provides continuity of service delivery.

Carers in Herts is a charitable company limited by guarantee, the contract is funded by Childrens Services and Public Health. The provider is well-established within the county and it is established that there is no clearly immediate competition to offer the range of services across the whole of Hertfordshire that are solely carer-focussed. As a statutory service it is felt that competitive tendering of this contract would pose a significant risk to service users of continuity of service delivery

Following market engagement and a compliant competitive procurement process in 2017-2018, one bid was received a second round of tendering occurred and again only one bid was received which was assessed as successfully meeting the Council's requirements following a scoring and moderation process involving both officers and young carers and was awarded to Carers in Herts.

Further research of neighbouring counties shows that their young carers services are delivered by small local organisations, who have strong local networks that enable them to deliver young carers services. It is felt that if we were to plan for a full procurement process that it would be unlikely that another provider would bid for this contract, making Carers in Herts the only

one supplier able to deliver young carers services locally and outweighing the benefits of complying with a full tender process.

In addition, Children's Services are recommissioning the Family Centre Service and looking to develop the current model and move towards a Family Hub model by March 2025. Family Hubs are a way of joining up locally to improve access to services, the connections between families, professionals, providers, and putting relationships at the heart of family help. Family Hubs bring together services for 0-19 (25 with SEND), with an effective Start for Life offer at their core. It is the aim that provision of young carers services would form part of the offer under the Family Hubs model building on exiting partnerships with key agencies such as Carers in Herts, complying with a full tender process at this stage would not allow for HCC to align the young carers services with this new model.

3. Alternative options considered and rejected

None

4. Consultation *(see Summary of Requirements below)*

Was any Councillor consulted? No

If yes:

(a) Comments of Executive Member/Committee Chairman *(delete as applicable)*

(b) Comments of other consultees

5. Any conflict of interest declared by a councillor who has been consulted in relation to the decision

(If a Councillor declares a conflict of interest DO NOT PROCEED without seeking advice from Democratic Services or Legal Services).

6. I am proceeding with the proposed decision.

Signed: Sally Orr

Title: Head of Family & Health Services Commissioning

Date: 11/12/23

Copies of record to:

- All consultees
- hard & electronic copy (if required to be made available for public inspection) to Democratic Services Manager - Room 213 County Hall.ⁱⁱ

Summary of Requirements to Inform/Consult Councillors

Significance of Proposed Action	Controversial	Relevant Councillor(s) to be Consulted
Technical/Professional/ Routine	No	No need to inform or consult councillors
Technical/Professional/ Routine	Yes	Executive Functions: Consult relevant Lead Executive Member and, where appropriate, Local Councillor Non-Executive Functions: Relevant Committee Chairman and, where appropriate, Local Councillor
Local	No	Executive Functions: Inform Lead Executive Member and Local Councillor Non-Executive Functions: Inform Local Councillor
Local	Yes	Executive Functions: Consult Lead Executive Member and Local Councillor Non-Executive Functions: Consult Local Councillor
General or County-wide	No	Executive Functions: Consult relevant Lead Executive Member (s) Non-Executive Functions: Consult relevant Committee Chairman
General or County-wide	Yes	Executive Functions: Consult relevant Lead Executive Member (s) and the Leader of the Council Non-Executive Functions: Consult relevant Committee Chairman/Leaders all Political Groups
