

Notice of Non KEY Executive Decision

Appendix 1 to this report is exempt from publication by virtue of paragraph 3 of the Access to Information Procedure Rules set out in the Constitution pursuant to Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972, as amended in that it contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

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| Subject Heading: | Award of Contract to Potton Kare Service Contract (PKS) for a period of up to 12 months to enable Havering's Early Help Service to implement a restructure which will bring the elements of this service in house |
| Decision Maker: | Tara Geere, Director of Starting Well |
| Cabinet Member: | Councillor Oscar Ford, Cabinet Member of Children and Young People |
| Report Author and contact details: | clare.jackson@havering.gov.uk |
| Policy context: | Work as part of this contract to be delivered in accordance with the Children Act 1989 |
| Financial summary: | Directly Award a new Contract to Potton Kare Service Contract (PKS) for a period of up to 12 months Value estimated at £249k. Spend will vary based on usage. |

Key Executive Decision

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| Relevant Overview & Scrutiny Committee: | People Overview & Scrutiny Sub Committee |
| Is it an urgent decision? | No |
| Is this decision exempt from being called-in? | Yes |

The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives

People - Things that matter for residents X

Place - A great place to live, work and enjoy

Resources - A well run Council that delivers for People and Place.

Part A – Report seeking decision

DETAIL OF THE DECISION REQUESTED AND RECOMMENDED ACTION

For the reasons stated in this report, the Director of Starting Well is recommended to approve the award of a contract to Potton Kare Services Ltd (Company number 08077041) for a period of up to 12 months for the delivery of welfare checks, supervised contact and family support services.

AUTHORITY UNDER WHICH DECISION IS MADE

Scheme 3.3.3 Powers common to all Strategic Directors Delegated to the Director of Starting Well as the statutory Director of Children's Services

1. Contracts

1.1 To award all contracts with a total contract value of below £1,000,000 other than contracts covered by Contract Procedure Rule 16.3. This delegation shall include the ability to extend or vary a contract up to and including a value of £1,000,000 (provided that the extension is in line with the existing contractual provisions.)

STATEMENT OF THE REASONS FOR THE DECISION

2. Commissioning Background

2.1 The service for welfare check, supervised contact and family support was procured by Havering and went live in April 2020 for an initial period of three years with the option to extend for a further two years.

2.2 The service was designed to meet some of the specific statutory duties the Authority has with regard to safeguarding and promoting welfare of children in the borough more specifically those children that are in need and to undertake enquiries where it is believed a child has suffered or is likely to suffer harm. The service was intended to have a strong focus on:

- Early intervention to support families to stay together and prevent children coming into care.
- Reducing the levels of placement disruption for children in care.
- Contributing to successful court proceedings when it is not a safe option for a child to remain with family.
- Managing risk and recognising safeguarding concerns.
- Whole family wellbeing and empowering families.
- Flexibility outside of the normal 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday working hours and being able to manage emergency referrals, an increase in service support hours or immediate changes of plans.

Key Executive Decision

3. Performance and Outcomes

3.1 The outcomes as outlined in the specification include:

- i. To contribute to reduced levels of placement disruption for children already in care;
- ii. To contribute to a reduction in the number of children going into care;
- iii. To contribute to successful court proceedings if a child remaining with family is not a safe option;
- iv. To support and contribute to an increase in children, who are in care, being reunified with their families or carers.

3.2 Following the decision to restructure the way this service is delivered, the service being offered by PKS is being brought in-house as part of the Early Help restructure to streamline operations and enhance service delivery. By employing new practitioners and upskilling the current workforce, the service aims to maintain high standards and deliver effective programs. This change will enable the service to work flexibly around the needs of families, building trusting relationships and providing consistent support. As a result, families will receive timely and effective assistance, reducing the need to repeatedly share their stories with different professionals and ultimately leading to better long-term outcomes.

3.3 The expected long-term outcomes include enhanced service quality, improved family support, and career progression opportunities within the Borough and the current service area. The service will consistently support effective interventions, work within required timeframes, and minimise the 'revolving door effect' for children and families. These outcomes are designed to ensure that families receive early the support they need to make sustainable changes, leading to overall improvement in service delivery and better long-term results, including reducing the number of children entering the care system.

4. Conclusion

4.1 The contract has been performing well and providing good outcomes where intervention could not be met by Havering services. There has been good feedback from operational teams within the Authority.

4.2 Havering are proposing to directly award a contract to Potton Kare Service Ltd (PKS) for a period of up to 12 months to allow the Early Help Team to develop an in house module. Awarding a contract to PKS will ensure continuity of the service while the restructure is completed whilst ensuring that Havering maintain the current price on a spot purchase basis which has been negotiated with the provider.

5. OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

Do Not Award a Contract :

Key Executive Decision

Not awarding extending the contract would leave the Council in a position whereby the current provision would not be available to families in Havering. This would leave a period of time without early intervention support packages for children who are resident in Havering and under “In Need”, “In Care” or subject to Child protection Plans.

Direct Award Contract For a Period of up to 12 Months :

Havering are proposing a Direct Award Contract to PKS for a period of up to 12 months to allow the Early Help Team to develop an in-house module. Awarding a Direct Contract will ensure continuity of the service while the restructure is completed whilst maintaining the current price on a spot purchase basis, which has been negotiated with the provider.

Following consultation with the council’s Brokerage Team it was ascertained that PKS were the most cost-effective provision with the experience of delivering this programme in Havering.

PRE-DECISION CONSULTATION

Engagement with several stakeholders has been undertaken to prepare this report. This includes supplies, Legal and Finance.

NAME AND JOB TITLE OF STAFF MEMBER ADVISING THE DECISION-MAKER

Name: Clare Jackson

Designation: Commissioner

Signature: *C Jackson*

Date: 21/07/2025

Part B - Assessment of implications and risks

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

The Council has statutory duties for the welfare of Children under the Children Act 1989. More specifically, in accordance with Section 17, the Council must provide services to children in need (as well as their families and others) and has a general duty in relation to children looked after by them under Section 22. Children's Services seek to award this contract in compliance with such duties.

This Report seeks approval to directly award a contract to Potton Kare Services Ltd (PKS) without undertaking a competitive process. As the value of the proposed contract is well below the threshold for Light Touch Services (as listed in Schedule 1 of the Procurement Act 2023), the proposal in this report will comply with relevant law.

Furthermore, the Council's Contracts Procedure Rules require each procurement with an estimated value of £100,000 or above to be subject to a formal tender exercise in conjunction with SPU. Officers have therefore obtained a waiver of the relevant Contract Procedure Rule (CPR 9.9) in accordance with the procedure set out in CPR14.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Finance comments

The value of the contract is variable based on actual costs.

If we estimate based on the average cost over the last 2 years, we would expect the cost to be £249k for a 12 month period.

The team have explored other options, and based on hourly rates PKS is the best value for money (£22 per hour vs £32 quoted by other suppliers).

Children's Services are currently developing an in house module in order to develop a more cost effective way of working in the future. As it stands, a Direct Award Contract will be awarded to PKS to provide continuity of welfare checks and supervision whilst this is being carried out.

HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS (AND ACCOMMODATION IMPLICATIONS WHERE RELEVANT)

The recommendations made in this report do not give rise to any identifiable HR risks or implications that would affect either the Council or its workforce.

EQUALITIES AND SOCIAL INCLUSION IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Key Executive Decision

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires the Council, when exercising its functions, to have due regard to:

- (i) The need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
- (ii) The need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share protected characteristics and those who do not, and;
- (iii) Foster good relations between those who have protected characteristics and those who do not.

Note: 'Protected characteristics' are age, sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnerships, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment.

The Council is committed to all of the above in the provision, procurement and commissioning of its services, and the employment of its workforce. In addition, the Council is also committed to improving the quality of life and wellbeing for all Havering residents in respect of socio-economics and health determinants.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Under the Health and Social Care Act 2012 the Council is responsible for improving and protecting the health and wellbeing of residents. Havering Council is committed to improving the health and wellbeing of all residents.

State Purpose of Report: Directly Award a new Contract to PKS for a period of up to 12 months to allow the Early Help Team to develop an in-house module.

The overall health and wellbeing implications arising from the proposed decision to directly award a new contract to PKS would be positive. The provider would be able to support service users with their mental health and wellbeing. They have proven to build relationships, in extreme circumstances, and delivered positive outcomes for service users.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Potton Kare Services plan routes to ensure efficiency in reducing mileage, reduce paper based forms where possible and use an energy saving philosophy in office space.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

APPENDICES

EXEMPT - Appendix 1

Key Executive Decision

Part C – Record of decision

I have made this executive decision in accordance with authority delegated to me by the Leader of the Council and in compliance with the requirements of the Constitution.

Decision

Proposal agreed

Details of Decision Maker

Signed



Name: Tara Geere, Director of Starting Well

Cabinet Portfolio held:

CMT Member title:

Head of Service title

Other manager title:

Date: 21.07.25

Lodging this notice

The signed decision notice must be delivered to Committee Services, in the Town Hall.

For use by Committee Administration

This notice was lodged with me on _____

Signed _____