

OFFICER DECISION FORM

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY: DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN FAMILY AND EDUCATION SERVICES

KEY DECISION YES

DIRECTORATE: CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & EDUCATION COMMITTEE

WARDS AFFECTED: ALL WARDS

SUBJECT: RE-TENDER OF THERAPEUTIC SUPPORT FOR CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER IN WIRRAL.

1.0 DECISION:

The Director of Children Family and Education Services has approved that a procurement exercise be commenced seeking tenders for a new specialist provider who will provide therapeutic support to Children Looked After in Wirral based upon the specification set out in paragraph 3.10 of the accompanying report.

2.0 REASONS FOR THE DECISION

- 2.1 As of August 2024, within Wirral there are 749 Children Looked After (CLA) and 349 children, who are subject to Special Guardianship Orders. The corporate parenting responsibilities of the Council includes having a duty under section 22(3)(a) of the Children Act 1989 to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children they look after. This includes the child's physical, emotional and mental health and acting on any early signs of health issues.
- 2.2 The Council's Children Looked After and Care Leavers Strategy 22-25 identifies emotional and physical health and wellbeing as a priority.
 - Priority 1 - Emotional and Physical health, and wellbeing – Making sure you are happy and healthy all the way through your childhood and into adulthood. Enabling you to build positive relationships, strengthen your sense of identity and understand your life experiences.
- 2.3 Children in care are four times more likely than their peers to have a mental health difficulty due to their experiences both before and during care. There is a requirement to commission a specialist provider to deliver bespoke mental health support and therapeutic interventions to support these young people to develop positive attachments with others, to develop a sense of their own identity, and a sense of safety.
- 2.4 The existing contract for the provision of therapeutic mental health support for CLA ends on 31st March 2025 and it is necessary to recommission this service

3.0 STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

3.1 The decision was made further to legal advice from the Deputy Monitoring Officer and the Section 151 Officer has confirmed that they do not incur unlawful expenditure. They are also compliant with equality legislation and an equality analysis and impact assessment has been completed. The decision reflects the core principles of good governance set out in the Council's Code of Corporate Governance

4.0 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

4.1 There were no interests declared.

Signed:

Officer:

Title: Director of Children, Family and Education Services

Date: October 2024

A list of background papers on this issue is held with:

Contact Officer: Steven Smith

Date: October 2024

Date of Publication:

Date of Expiry of Call-In Period: