

Record of Officer Decision

Commissioning of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Service

Decision Taker and Date Decision Taken:

Director of Children's Services on 04 October 2023.

Summary of Matter or Issue Requiring Decision:

Torbay Council currently commission Barnardo's to deliver a bespoke service for children and young people aged 10 – 18 who have been assessed as at risk or experiencing sexual exploitation (internally referred to as the Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Service). This contract was awarded following a full procurement process in 2021 with a service commence date of 1st April 2021. The current contract length is 3 years (2 years plus 12-month optional extension). The contract is in its final year with the 12-month extension granted from April 2023 ending on 31st March 2024.

Following review and preparation for re-commission of this service there has been recognition that significant work is due to take place across the next 12 months which will impact and inform Torbay's response to exploitation (including CSE). The continuation of the existing service for a further 12 months minimum length to be contracted via a waiver. This will allow continuation and stability for the children and young people accessing the service whilst key work takes place that will inform future service specification.

Decision Taken:

That the Child Sexual Exploitation Service contract with Barnardo's be continued for a minimum of 12 months.

Summary of Reason(s) for Decision Taken:

A significant amount of focused work on Torbay's response to exploitation is planned to take place across the next 12 months (and ongoing). Considerations have been made based on the minimum procurement timeframe for this service being 7 months.

Reasons for decision:

- Learning from the recent Multi Agency Case Audit (MACA) focused on Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) is due to be presented by the chair of the Torbay Safeguarding Children's Partnership (TSCP) Child and Young Persons Exploitation Group (CYPEG) to key partnership panels including the TSCP Executive Group at the end of September 2023. There will be a collective partnership response to the report with the aim of implementing a multi-agency action plan. The process of reflection, response and development of an action plan is anticipated to take a minimum of 4 - 6 months with implementation of the action plan ongoing.
- There is due to be a TSCP Task and Finish group established to progress a Torbay contextual safeguarding model. This is a complex piece of work that is due to commence in Autumn 2023. The implications of this work will be cross cutting across Children's Services and the wider partnership. The initial months of scoping and review of this task and finish group will inform service specification.
- Proposed Government reforms 'Stable Homes Built on Love' and the interlinking legislative updates to 'Working Together to Safeguarding Children'. The response to what is referred to as 'harm outside of the home' is referenced explicitly in these documents. Torbay has recently set

up a task and finish group and thematic workstreams to focus on the anticipated impact of these reforms across the sector.

Summary of Alternatives or Options considered and rejected and Background Papers:

Options considered:

- Full procurement process with existing service specification – risk identified that the newly commissioned service would not align with service need following key pieces of work taking place regarding exploitation, harm outside of the home and contextual safeguarding.
- Full procurement process with new service specification including the potential to expand the service to include Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE). Key work is still underway to understand and inform service design and need.
- Deliver an in-house service. Key work is still underway to understand and inform service design and need.

Details of any conflict of interest and dispensation granted to the Officer taking the decision or by any Member of the Council in delegating responsibility for any specific express delegation:

N/A

Implementation:

This decision will be implemented immediately.

A copy of this decision and any supporting documentation considered by the Officer taking this decision may also be available for inspection by the public at the Council's offices or posted upon payment of any copying and postage charges. Any member of the public wishing to take up either of these options is asked to please ring (01803) 207087 or email governance.support@torbay.gov.uk

Signed: _____ Date: _____
(Director of Children's Services)