

Record of operational decision

Decision title:	Decision to commission a Clinical/Counselling Psychologist for Leaving Care Teams
Date of decision:	11/03/2026
Decision maker:	Service Director - Corporate Parenting, Children and Young People's Directorate
Authority for delegated decision:	Chief executive scheme of delegation – updated 22/11/22 CYP-20: Commissioning of children's and young people's services including schools, early years, colleges, adult and learning, social care and vulnerable children; and children's centre services.
Ward:	All wards
Consultation:	None for this role however consultations have taken place previously for the linked Children who are Looked After Counselling Psychologist role at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint Senior Management Team meeting – February 2024 • Commissioning Programme Board – March 2024
Decision made:	<p>To award a contract to Herefordshire and Worcestershire Health and Care Trust (HWHCT), Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS), for the provision of a 0.61 FTE (3 days per week) Band 8a Clinical/Counselling Psychologist, to be based within Herefordshire Council Children and Young People's Directorate's Care Leavers Teams.</p> <p>The contract will initially be from 1st April 2026 to 31st July 2029 at a total cost of up to £55,921 for the first year. This fee includes all indirect costs and the 3.3% NHS consolidated pay increase for 2026/27, with increases to follow each year in line with Government awards.</p> <p>Additionally, there is an option to extend this contract using the Health Care Services (Provider Selection Regime) Regulations 2023, and subject to internal governance procedures being followed.</p>
Reasons for decision:	<p>In commissioning this service, the Council aims to support children who are looked after (CLA) and care leavers, by improving knowledge and understanding of the impact of trauma on this population that may have been caused by one, or a combination of the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Psychological, physical, or sexual abuse • Witnessing or experiencing domestic violence • Sudden or violent loss of a loved one • Refugee or war experiences • Physical or sexual assault • Neglect <p>These traumatic experiences can lead to other social and mental health disorders that further impact on the wellbeing of the child. This can include post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), social anxiety, emotional dysregulation, self-harm and others.</p> <p>In order to increase the therapeutic offer to young people leaving care, Herefordshire Council's Children and Young People's Directorate will</p>

	<p>appoint a specialist clinical/counselling psychologist, who will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lead on the psychological care offered to young people (age 16-25) supported by the Leaving Care Teams. • work closely with the young person’s (YP) network to support a psychologically informed understanding of their emotional and mental health needs by providing consultation and trauma-informed formulation to professionals and carers, and working directly with YP where clinically indicated. • be part of the Psychology Service provided to Herefordshire’s care experienced YP; supporting professionals, carers and children and also be part of a team of psychologists in Herefordshire CAMHS working with Care Leavers with complex difficulties. • have a strong visible presence in the Leaving Care Teams, working closely with Personal Advisors and Social Workers in supporting YP who are care experienced and provide a link role between CAMHS, AMH and Social Care • provide trauma informed and attachment based interventions with an understanding of the challenges this client group faces. <p>The clinical/counselling psychologist will be employed by Herefordshire and Worcestershire Health and Care Trust (HWHCT), as part of the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS), but will work within Herefordshire Council’s Children and Young People’s Directorate.</p>
<p>Equality Considerations</p>	<p>Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the ‘general duty’ on public authorities is set out as follows:</p> <p>A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act; • advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; • foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. <p>The public sector equality duty (specific duty) requires us to consider how we can positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations, and demonstrate that we are paying ‘due regard’ in our decision making in the design of policies and in the delivery of services. Our providers will be made aware of their contractual requirements in regards to equality legislation.</p> <p>The Equality Act 2010 ensures that children and young people in care have the same rights and protections as their peers. It prohibits discrimination in various areas, such as education, healthcare, housing, and access to goods and services.</p>
<p>Highlight any associated risks/finance/legal/equality considerations:</p>	<p>This service has been procured via the Health Care Services (Provider Selection Regime) Regulations 2023. Meetings have previously taken place with representatives from the Council’s Legal and Procurement teams to ensure all appropriate procurement and governance procedures have been</p>

	<p>followed.</p> <p>Funding for this post is in the agreed 2026/2027 base budget agreed at Cabinet on 13/02/26.</p>
<p>Details of any alternative options considered and rejected:</p>	<p>Do nothing. This is not recommended. The purpose of this new service is to additionally offer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highly specialist assessment for children and young people (CYP) in collaboration with social workers, personal advisors, carers and the wider professional network. • Highly specialist trauma-informed and attachment based psychological interventions, 1:1 and groups. • Trauma-informed formulation and consultation to social care teams, including complex risk management planning, to inform pathway planning. • Supervision and advice to social care teams to support a trauma-informed and psychologically informed understanding of Care Leaver needs. • Close collaboration with other services supporting CYP, e.g. Adult Mental Health, Safe Connections, EPs. • Specialist advice on recommendations from specialist assessments. • Advice and liaison to professionals where a referral to CAMHS or Adult Mental Health for specialist intervention is required. • Outcome/psychometric measures to monitor the effectiveness and experience of CYP and professionals. • High quality documentation and contribute to reports evaluating the role, identifying areas for improvement.
<p>Details of any declarations of interest made:</p>	<p>None</p>