

Record of operational decision

Decision title:	Award of contract for housing related support service for children in care and care leavers aged 16-25
Date of decision:	7 November 2025
Decision Maker:	Corporate Director, Children and Young People
Authority for delegated decision:	The key decision made by the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People on 4 July 2025, provides delegated authority to the Corporate Director for Children and Young People to award a contract following the completion of a procurement process, commencing from the end of the previous contract on 01 March 2026 up to 28 February 2033.
Ward:	Countywide
Consultation:	Engagement has taken place with key stakeholders, including current providers and young people, to gain their views on the development of the service.
Decision made:	Following a full open tender process to award a contract to Connexus Homes Limited for the housing related support service for children in care and care leavers aged 16-25 for a period of up to 84 months from 01 March 2026 up to 28 February 2033.
Reasons for decision:	<p>As a corporate parent, the Council is committed to ensuring that children in care and care leavers have access to safe and appropriate accommodation.</p> <p>To strengthen local provision, additional supported accommodation will be introduced within the county. This will enable vulnerable young people to remain close to their communities and maintain local connections. These improvements are expected to deliver better outcomes for individual young people.</p> <p>Currently, the accommodation-based support service provides homes for 10 young people. In response to local need, the new contract will expand capacity to 16 places.</p> <p>This service will also help reduce reliance on temporary accommodation and support the Council in meeting its statutory duties under the Children and Social Work Act 2017, Housing Act 1996, and Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.</p> <p>A fully compliant procurement process was undertaken in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules. The specification was issued via the Council's e-tendering portal. Three bids were received; two were deemed non-compliant, and one met all requirements. The compliant bid was evaluated against the published criteria and scored in line with the Council's procedures. Following due diligence checks, the Council will enter into a contract with Connexus Homes Limited to deliver this service.</p>
Equality Considerations	A full Equality Impact Assessment has been completed and the relevant findings from this were incorporated into the service design this included the service being delivered in line with Supported Accommodation Act 2023

	and subsequent regulations.
Highlight any associated risks/finance/legal/equality considerations:	<p>Legal - The legal risk is low. The Council has conducted a compliant procurement process in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules, and an outcome has been identified based on the results of the evaluation carried out by the Evaluation Panel.</p> <p>Finance - Funding for the commissioning of the service has been approved as part of the governance process.</p> <p>Health and Safety - The commissioned provider will be expected to work to the same health and safety standards and codes of practice as the council, as far as is reasonably practicable.</p>
Details of any alternative options considered and rejected:	<p>Alternative options that were considered:</p> <p>Not to recommission the service - This option was not recommended. This contract supports the Council's commitment to its care leavers as a corporate parent and there would be a lost opportunity to provide local accommodation and improve outcomes for very vulnerable children in care and care leavers if the service is not recommissioned.</p> <p>Extend the contract with the existing provider - This option was not practicable as the contract does not contain an option to extend. This option would also not enable the Council to grow the service which will include additional accommodation and move on support which will provide a holistic end to end service.</p> <p>Deliver as an in-house service - This was not recommended at this time due to time constraints that would be required to fully develop this option.</p>
Details of any declarations of interest made:	None

Signed:

Date:

Please ensure that signatures are redacted before publishing.