**From:** Hazel South, Commissioner (Children and Young People’s Services)

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**To: Kent Housing Options Group**

**Date:** 18 May 2023

**Subject: Children’s Commissioning Update**

This briefing note sets out the updates within the accommodation and placements team of the Children’s Commissioning Team.

**Supported Accommodation Recommissioning**

Young People’s Supported Accommodation Services are being recommissioned with a contract live date of April 2024 and reviewed in line with new Ofsted regulations; the new Accommodation Pathway will provide accommodation and support for 16/17-year-olds and housing only for care leavers up to a maximum age of 19, with the exception of those waiting for status. Children in Need will have access to the new lower needs supported accommodation until they are 18. An efficient structured planned move-on will ensure flow of placements which should avoid the silting-up of the service.

The model has a clearly identified step down approach and will be in line with the joint working protocols and will enable a smoother entry into the service. Efficient joint assessments, payment and agreement of Housing benefit will be required by Children in Need to enter the service.

Procurement documentation is currently being prepared and the team are aiming to release the tender in June with a contract award in October for go-live in April 2024. Clarification has been sought from Ofsted regarding legislation start dates as it is unclear.

**Childrens Commissioning Restructure**

The strategic commissioning team is currently undergoing a restructure with a view to increase commercial capacity and commissioning alignment with business needs, including returning each team to sit within their respective services (children’s and adults social care). We expect to know more by the end of May.

**Additional Reception Centre for Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children and Young People**

We are due to release the tender for this additional reception centre service in June, which has been slightly delayed by gaining advice around how the Ofsted legislation will affect the services provided.

**CAFIS**

This post adoption service has reached the evaluation stage of the tender.

**Ofsted Regulation Provider Support**

We are currently working with our semi-independent providers to aid them in understanding their requirements to register with Ofsted to continue providing support for 16/17-year-olds post October 2023.