

**From:** Hazel South, Commissioner (Children and Young People's Services)  
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**To:** **Kent Housing Options Group**

**Date:** 7 September Meeting

**Subject:** **Children's Commissioning Update**

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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 commencement date (for Low and 18-year-old Care Leavers) of 28 October 2023 in line with the Ofsted Legislation Date. The High (previously YPSAFS) will go live on 1 April 2024. This has put significant pressure on the team and internally to complete the procurement and plan for system and practice changes internally.

The new Accommodation model will provide accommodation and support for 16/17-year-old Children in Care and Children in Need and housing only for care leavers ceasing when they turn 19, except for those waiting for immigration status. Children in Need will have access to the new increased capacity Low Needs Supported Accommodation, ceasing when they turn 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 and out of the service. Efficient joint assessments, payment, and agreement of Accommodation Costs from the districts will be required by Children in Need to enter the service.

The Invitation to Tender was released on 23 August with a contract award early October for the Ofsted Legislation go-live on 28 October for Low and Transitional. We are also planning some temporary arrangements for 16/17-year-olds in housing that do not currently receive support, to ensure that we are adhering to the legal requirement. Due to the change in the Ofsted timetable, we are having to release the tender over the summer holidays, and we would welcome support from our district colleagues if they are approached for advice from potential providers over this period.

### **Childrens Commissioning Restructure**

The strategic commissioning team has completed the restructure and the children's commissioning team is returning to sit within their respective services (we are returning to children's social care). The new structure will be live from the 1 September which will mean some changes in the way that the team will work. We have lost several posts from the structure, and this will take some time to embed.

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

Commissioning have successfully completed the procurement for an additional reception centre service, and we received no challenges during standstill. An update will hopefully be able to be provided at the next meeting on progress on contract award and next steps.

### **CAFIS**

The Post Adoption Service has been awarded to Barnardo's.

### **Ofsted Regulation Supported Accommodation**

Commissioning are currently working with our unregulated accommodation providers to support them in achieving regulation. Providers have started to complete their application for registration before the 28 October 2023. Those who fail to complete a successful application will no longer be able to provide supported for 16/17-year-olds.