

West Sussex County Council

Proposed Executive Decision for **1 March 2021** call-in deadline **5 p.m. on 10 March 2021**

The following proposed key decision has been endorsed by an officer and will come into effect at the end of the call-in period unless the call-in procedure is activated.

Decision Title & Ref No:	Award of a contract for the provision of 24-hour wraparound support for short-term/emergency supported accommodation for children looked after - OKD64 (20/21)
Officer responsible for Decision	Lucy Butler - Executive Director Children, Young People and Learning
West Sussex Plan priority	Best Start in Life
Electoral Divisions	All Divisions
Key Decision	Yes
Purpose	<p>The Council has a statutory duty to provide placements for all children looked after (CLA) that are appropriate to meet each individual's specific needs. Due to the level and complexity of their needs and the lack of availability of appropriate care and support elsewhere, during the last 6 months of 2020 it has been necessary to accommodate 4 young people in solo placements. This followed exhaustive placement searches nationwide, including registered children's homes and foster care agencies, which resulted in no offers and a number of failed placements.</p> <p>These solo placements were established at short notice and, due to the timescales involved and the safety of the children concerned, a competitive tender process was unable to take place. The 24-hour care packages needed for each of these 4 children are staffed by Bespoke Guardians Ltd, a specialist staffing agency and the only provider able to respond to each placement. Approval to contract with Bespoke Guardians for this service was retrospectively sought, and approval given, via a standing orders waiver for a single tender.</p> <p>The need for this type of specialist 24-hour care package for young people is anticipated to continue. Although the services have already been put in place due to urgency a contract is required to deliver these services for a 12-month period whilst options for the longer term are considered. The total cost of the services provided by Bespoke Guardians over this period is estimated at £1.8m.</p>
Decision	(1) The Executive Director of Children Young People and Learning has approved, in retrospect, the award of a contract with Bespoke Guardians Ltd for the provision of 24-hour wraparound support for short-term/emergency accommodation for looked after children, for a period of 12 months from June

	2020.
Interest and nature of interest declared	None
Service Contact	Thomas Strivens, Programme Manager - Tel: 033 022 22082
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Background Papers	See report for details