



## Officer Decision Record – Key Decision

Key decisions taken by an officer are subject to the 5 day call in period from circulation to Members, and therefore the decision will be released for implementation following the call-in period and no call in being received

### 1. Cabinet date and copy resolution this key decision relates to

In August 2024 Cabinet approved to go out to re-procurement for a speech and language therapy (SALT) contract, for two existing parts of a current contract in place with NLAG: Early Years and mainstream school provision. It resolved:

1. That the undertaking of a procurement exercise for speech and language provision as set out in the report now submitted be approved.
2. That the Director of Children's Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Children and Education be authorised to commence the above procurement exercise.
3. That the Director of Children's Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Children and Education be delegated authority to award, and take all ancillary actions reasonably arising, including implementation and mobilisation.
4. That the Assistant Director Law and Governance (Monitoring Officer) be authorised to complete and execute all requisite legal documentation arising from the above recommendations.

### 2. Subject and details of the matter (to include reasons for the decision)

Following a successful open procurement activity, the decision is required to appoint a future (SALT) provider, in order to continue to meet the identified need and to be able to continue the positive progress that is linked to outcomes identified in this

previous cabinet. All of the funding required has already been identified and is jointly commissioned through funding from Public Health and the Dedicated schools grant High Needs block.

The council and Integrated Care Board (ICB) have a shared statutory duty to provide a speech and language provision across the borough.

The council assumes responsibility for universal SALT services for 0-16 and commissions support for 0-5 above the level of need addressed by the Public Health Nursing Team. For those aged 5-16 the council commissions services to support young people in addition to the statutory responsibility on schools and at a sub-clinical level. This contract for the commissioned support is due to expire in March 2025.

### 3. Decision being taken

That the Director for Children's Services in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Children and Education:

1. Awards the contract for speech and language therapy services to Chatter-Bug Ltd for an initial 36 months with an annual value of £165,000 , Whole life value of £495,000.

There is then the option to extend this for an additional 24 months at the same annual value making it a potential full life value of £825,000.

2. Carries out all ancillary actions reasonably arising, including mobilisation and implementation of the new provider.

### 4. Is it an Urgent Decision? If yes, specify the reasons for urgency. **Urgent decisions will require sign off by the relevant scrutiny chair(s) as not subject to call in.**

No

### 5. Anticipated outcome(s)/benefits

This decision supports the SENDAP strategies ambitions and priorities.

The decision also supports SENDAP transformation and ensuring children and young people have the right support at right time in right place form activities delivered, positively impacting on outcomes, as a result of the funding.

The decision supports a more sustainable SENDAP system for NEL children and young people, hopefully reducing the need for specialist places and supporting them earlier and within their own communities.

Whilst impacting on the DSG funding initially, this will contribute to supporting sustainability of DSG, as outlined and accepted by the DfE within the Council's DSG Management Plan.

**6. Details of any alternative options considered and rejected by the officer when making the decision** (this should be similar to original cabinet decision)

**Do nothing option** would not meet the Local Authority statutory duties or the needs of our children in North East Lincolnshire. Significant costs will be incurred as well as reputational and potentially legal negative impacts as capacity will be reduced. This option is therefore not considered viable.

**7. Background documents considered** (web links to be included and copies of documents provided for publishing)

SENDAP strategy approved by cabinet March 2024.

SENDAP-Strategies-Cabinet-ReportPDF-2403KBicon-namepaperclip-prefixfa.pdf  
(nelincs.gov.uk)

21<sup>st</sup> August Cabinet decision notice - [3.-Decision-Notice-Cabinet-21st-August-2024-PDF-197KB.pdf](#)

**8. Does the taking of the decision include consideration of Exempt information? If yes, specify the relevant paragraph of Schedule 12A and the reasons**

No

**9. Details of any conflict of interest declared by any Cabinet Member who was consulted by the officer which relates to the decision (in respect of any declared conflict of interest, please provide a note of dispensation granted by the Council's Chief Executive)**

None

**10. Monitoring Officer Comments (Monitoring Officer or nominee)**

The decision is consistent with the will and expectation of Cabinet. A fully compliant procurement process has been followed and relevant legal and procurement colleagues are engaged.

**11. Section 151 Officer Comments (Deputy S151 Officer or nominee)**

The contract award is in line with budget allocation and in line with expectations

**12. Human Resource Comments (Head of People and Culture or nominee)**

There are no direct HR implications arising from the contents of this report.

**13. Risk Assessment (in accordance with the Report Writing Guide)**

If unable to award a contract to provide this specialist support, there is both a reputational risk as well as potential legal challenge if the council fails to meet this duty. As well as having a statutory duty the council recognises the importance and impact speech and language assessment, intervention and therapy is at a young age. It provides a timely and effective service which will not only help children reach their full potential through skills and learning, but also aim to provide them with the skills to become independent as they develop into adults.

**14. Has the Cabinet Tracker been updated with details of this decision?**

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**15. Decision Maker(s):**

Name: Ann-Marie Matson

Title: Director for Children Services

Signed: REDACTED

Dated: 6<sup>th</sup> March 2025

**16. Consultation carried out with Portfolio Holder(s):**

Name: Cllr Margaret Cracknell

Title: Portfolio Holder for Children and Education

Signed: REDACTED

Dated: 6<sup>th</sup> March 2025**17. If the decision is urgent then consultation should be carried out with the relevant Scrutiny Chair/Mayor/Deputy Mayor**

Name:

Title:

Signed:

Dated:

Key Decisions are defined in the Constitution as:

A decision (whether taken collectively or individually by members) which is likely:

- (i) to result in the Council incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the Council's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates; or
- (ii) to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards.

A decision will be considered financially significant if:

- (i) in the case of revenue expenditure, it results in the incurring of expenditure or making savings of £350,000 or greater;
- (ii) in the case of capital expenditure, the capital expenditure/savings are in excess of £350,000 or 20% of the total project cost, whichever is the greater

In determining whether a decision is significant in terms of its effect on an area comprising two or more wards, consideration shall be given to:

- (i) the number of residents/service users that will be affected in the wards concerned;
- (ii) the likely views of those affected (i.e. is the decision likely to result in substantial public interest)
- (iii) whether the decision may incur a significant social, economic or environmental risk.