

Parent Infant Mental Health Service (PIMHS)

Decision Maker: Shelley Kipling, Chief Executive

Service Area: Children's Services Integration

Directorate: Children and Young People

Report Author: Chantelle Fraser, Commissioning Officer CYP, Ryan Rothery, Best Start in Life Programme Manager

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Date of Decision: 17 October 2026

1. Power to make the decision

The decision is being taken under the authorisation contained in Section 9C – Delegations to Specific Officers of Part 3 (Responsibility for Functions) of the Council Constitution for the Chief Executive to take any emergency decisions in respect of the Council's executive functions which cannot be delayed until the next Cabinet meeting.

2. Decision Sought

Oldham Council currently commissions Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust to deliver the Parent Infant Mental Health Service (PIMHS) as part of the Family Hubs and Best Start in Life offer. The current contract expires on 6 January 2027 and contains no option to extend.

The service is performing well and provides specialist clinical support for vulnerable families. To ensure continuity of service delivery and retain the skilled clinical workforce, it is proposed that the Council undertakes a Provider Selection Regime (PSR) Direct Award Process C. This is considered the most appropriate procurement route for a health-based service of this nature. Awarding a further one-year contract will avoid disruption to families accessing the service and provide time to review and develop longer-term commissioning arrangements, taking account of the confirmation of Best Start in Life grant funding through to 2029.

Recommendation: Approve the completion of a Provider Selection Regime (PSR) Direct Award Process C for the Parent Infant Mental Health Service for a period of one year from 7 January 2027 to 6 January 2028, total value £261,000.00. Approve the use of Best Start in Life funding to support the contract award. Delegate authority to the Director to award the contract following the successful completion of the PSR process.

3. Reason for urgency

The current contract expires on 6 January 2027 and does not contain an option to extend. To enable sufficient time to complete the Provider Selection Regime (PSR) Direct Award Process C, issue the required notices and complete governance processes ahead of the contract expiry date, a decision is required before the next Cabinet meeting. Failure to do so could result in delays to the procurement process and a potential interruption to service delivery.

4. Risk(s) of not taking the decision

Failure to take a decision could result in delays to the procurement process and a potential interruption to service delivery. There is also a risk that specialist clinical staff employed within the service would seek alternative employment, resulting in the loss of valuable expertise, established relationships and local knowledge.

5. Financial impact if decision not taken forward

Failure to approve the proposed PSR Direct Award Process C may result in additional costs associated with recommissioning and mobilising a new service provider. The loss of preventative early intervention support could also increase demand for higher-cost specialist and statutory services across health and children's services. The proposed contract will be funded through the Best Start in Life grant and is contained within the approved funding allocation. Failure to utilise this funding for its intended purpose may impact the delivery of Best Start in Life programme outcomes and reduce the availability of specialist support for families.

Any underspend in the Best Start in Life grant in 2026/27 could be clawed back by DfE.

6. Statutory Officer clearances

a. Section 151 Officer

Name Lee Walsh

Date 14 September 2026

Comments

The preferred option is to approve the award of a one-year contract for the provision of the Parent Infant Mental Health Service (PIMHS), following completion of the procurement process, with an estimated contract value of £261k. The contract will be funded from the Best Start in Life Grant for which the Council has formally accepted the funding allocation for the period 2026/27 to 2028/29, amounting to £5.633 million in total.

The full cost of the contract has been incorporated within the planned programme of activity funded through the grant. As a result, the proposal will not create any additional revenue pressures on the Council's General Fund.

Any future commissioning arrangements and associated financial commitments beyond the proposed one-year contract term will be subject to separate consideration and approval through the appropriate governance processes.

b. Monitoring Officer

Name Alex Bougatef

Date: 11th September 2026

Comments:

The exercise of emergency powers should be undertaken in consultation with the Leader or Deputy Leader of the Council. However, the Council has not yet appointed

a Leader or Deputy Leader for the current municipal year; it is therefore not possible to consult them. In addition, there is no certainty about when a Leader or Deputy Leader will be appointed as the Council has failed at successive meetings to do so. For the reasons given in the report, an urgent decision relating to the report is required, and it cannot wait until the appointment of a Leader and Deputy Leader at some undetermined future date.