

Report to: Lead Member for Adult Social Care and Health

Date of meeting: 20 March 2026

By: Director of Adult Social Care and Health

Title: Contract for the Circle Room young person's sexual health clinic service

Purpose: To seek Lead Member approval for direct award of a new two-year contract of the value of £45,000 per annum from the 1 April 2026.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Lead Member is recommended to:

Approve the proposal for the direct award as described in the Exempt Report.

1 Background

1.1 As part of the Council's Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR) process to address budget pressures, a proposal was made to potentially decommission the Circle Room sexual health service in Lewes, which currently receives £45,000 annually with a proposed closure date of 31 March 2026. This date corresponds with the current contract end date.

1.2 The Lead Member for Adult Social Care and Health approved a targeted consultation to evaluate the service, and an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) was conducted to inform the decision-making process.

1.3 Recommendations regarding the future of the Circle Room based on consultation findings, equality and financial considerations, and identified risks were shared with Lead Member on 15 December 2025.

1.4 The Lead Member approved continuing the service under a new contract award as stated here [Agenda for Lead Member for Adult Social Care and Health on Monday, 15th December, 2025, 2.00 pm | East Sussex County Council](#).

1.5 Approval of the procurement route to market and award recommendation is now being sought.

2 Supporting information

2.1 The consultation and discussions on the future of The Circle Room Sexual Health Service demonstrated its cost effectiveness and crucial role in reducing unwanted pregnancies, Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs), and HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) amongst people under 25 years old.

2.2 For this reason, maintaining the Circle Room Service, under a new 2 year contract of the same value of £45,000 with revised specifications is the proposed option.

2.3 The new contract will start on 1st April 2026 and will be reviewed after 2 years to allow population data and performance monitoring to guide adaptation of the service. Outcome indicators will be monitored quarterly, with annual reviews.

2.4 The service specifications have been reviewed to introduce young people to alternative sexual health services, including the online provision, to support young people transitioning to the over-25 sexual health service offer. In addition, the newly reviewed service specification focuses on assessment and redirecting/referring users to wider opportunistic support services as appropriate (smoking cessation, mental health support, weight management as well as assessment and referrals for substance misuse) to guarantee holistic care.

2.5 Future collaboration with Integrated Community Teams as per population needs, supported by a data driven approach, may extend services, subject to budget constraints.

3 Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

3.1 On 15 December 2025 the Lead Member approved the continuation of The Circle Room Sexual Health Service under a new contract. The clinic is well used, cost effective and plays a crucial role in reducing unwanted pregnancies, STIs, and HIV amongst people under 25 years old.

3.2 The Lead Member is therefore recommended to approve the proposal for the direct award as described in the Exempt Report.

MARK STANTON
Director of Adult Social Care and Health

Contact Officer: Tony Proom – Strategic Commissioner for Sexual Health
Email: tony.proom@eastsussex.gov.uk