

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 online sexual health service.

Purpose: To inform and seek approval from the Lead Member for Adult Social Care and Health for the re-procurement of the Online Sexual Health Service in East Sussex.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Lead Member is recommended to:

- 1) Approve the re-procurement of the Online Sexual Health Service in East Sussex as recommended in the Exempt Report; and
 - 2) Delegate authority to the Director of Adult Social Care and Health to take all necessary actions to award the contract.
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1. Background

1.1 The current Online Sexual Health Service in East Sussex contract, provided by Preventx, started on 1 November 2022. In 2024 the contract was extended for a further two years and it is due to end on 31 October 2026.

1.2 The current annual value is £735,800 per annum.

1.3 The online service model consists of a fully integrated e-sexual and reproductive health services, specifically:

- An online form which provides an in-depth sexual health and wellbeing assessment.
- Postal home Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI) and HIV testing, and pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) for HIV.
- Postal Emergency Hormonal Contraception (EHC), bridging contraception and condoms.
- Simple STI treatment following positive diagnosis (more complex cases or cases involving safeguarding will be referred to the Specialist Sexual Health service).

1.4 The service model was developed with the 'face-to-face' Specialist Sexual Health Service. The partnership arrangement between Preventx and the Specialist Sexual Health Service (currently provided by [Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust](#)) ensures enhanced online provision, seamless referral, and increased access to services..

2. Supporting information

2.1 The value of the new annual (capped) contract is £700,000 per annum.

2.2 The proposed new contract duration will be two years with the option to extend by a further two years, subject to need, funding and the commissioners being satisfied with the level of service received during the initial term and following agreement between the commissioners and provider.

2.3 The total contract value over the four-year period is £2,800,000 subject to agreed extensions.

2.4 It has been determined that the contract now falls under the Provider Selection Regime (PSR) as a mixed procurement, with the main subject-matter of the procurement being relevant health care services for the purposes of the health service in England (CPV Codes 85145000-7 Services provided by medical laboratories and 85111810-1 Blood analysis services), and the view that the other services of which fall under the Procurement Act 2023 (CPV Code 72000000 IT services: consulting, software development, Internet and support) could not reasonably be supplied under a separate contract.

2.5 Procurement colleagues have completed an options appraisal for this commissioning activity. See table 1.

Table 1: Summary of Procurement Options Appraisal

Option	When it applies	Key steps	Effort & risk
Option A – PSR Direct Award Process C	No “considerable change” to the current contract; incumbent remains suitable	Direct call-off from G-Cloud 14 Framework; assess PSR five key criteria; publish Intention to Award and Confirmation of Award notices	Lowest administration: higher risk of challenge if changes are underestimated
Option B – PSR Most Suitable Provider Process	“Considerable change” to the contract (e.g. different terms or longer duration)	Publish Intended Approach Notice; assess expressions of interest against PSR criteria; standstill and award notices	More administration than Option A; lower risk of challenge due to considering alternative providers
Option C – PSR Competitive Process	Full competitive tender	Full tender process	Not considered to be a good use of limited resources given that there is a small market

2.6 Exempt Report contains recommended option.

2.7 The Online Sexual Health Service in East Sussex specification is attached in Appendix 1 for information.

2.8 A [Sexual Health Needs Assessment](#) was conducted in 2025. This is being used to update the previously completed Equality Impact Assessment (EIA). The EIA analysis showed no potential for discrimination and that all appropriate opportunities had been taken to advance equality and foster good relations between groups.

3. Conclusion and reason for recommendations

3.1 The current Online Sexual Health Service Contract is due to end on 31 October 2026 and the option proposed is stated within the Exempt Report. The proposed capped contract value for each year of the contract exceeds £500,000 and the procurement covers all wards in East Sussex.

3.2 The Online Sexual Health Service represents a high quality, discrete, co-designed, fully integrated offer of sexual health and contraceptive services. Maintaining this service is a priority to guarantee high accessibility of cost effective sexual health services for all, reduction of stigma,

earlier detection of sexually transmitted infections and HIV and to reduce pressure on specialist sexual health services.

3.3 The Lead Member is therefore recommended to:

- 1) Approve the key decision for the re-procurement of the Online Sexual Health Service in East Sussex as recommended in the Exempt Report; and
- 2) Delegate authority to the Director of Adult Social Care and Health to take all necessary actions to award the contract.

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Appendix:

Appendix 1 : Service Specification Online Sexual Health Service in East Sussex