

London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham Record of Cabinet Member Decision

The call-in has expired and the Decision can be implemented.

- Draft Decision List published on: 13 November 2025
- Confirmed Decision List published on: 18 November 2025

1. **TITLE: Approval of the financial contributions to the ICB held Speech and Language Therapy contract**

2. **DECISION MADE BY:** Deputy Leader (responsible for Children and Education)

3. **DECISION:**

1. Approves the annual financial contribution of £638,753 towards the contract held by Northwest London Integrated Care Board for Speech and Language Therapy services provided by Central London Community Healthcare NHS Trust (CLCH) for five years from March 2025 to April 2030, for a total of £3,193,765.
2. Approves an additional financial contribution of £71,636 per annum towards the contract held by the Northwest London Integrated Care Board for Speech and Language Therapy services provided by Central London Community Healthcare NHS Trust (CLCH) for an integrated Speech Therapist post within the Council's Joint Communication Team for a period of five years, for a total of £358,180.

4. **REASON FOR DECISION:**

The decision enables the Local Authority to discharge its statutory duties in securing provision specified in Section F of the EHC Plan (s.42 Children and Families Act 2014) whilst supporting ongoing transformation work in developing a robust ordinarily available offer that supports meeting speech, language and communication needs earlier and without the need for an EHC Plan.

5. **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED:**

Option 1: Agree to the financial contributions for the Speech and Language services, recommendations one and two. (Recommended)

1. This will secure existing provision enabling the Local Authority to continue to meet its statutory responsibilities for those children and young people who continue to require access to specialist Speech and Language Therapy services whilst investing in early intervention services and provision to meet needs.
2. This is an existing contractual arrangement held by the NWL ICB. The service is not being re-procured but continued under the current contract, to which the Local Authority contributes annually. This approach maintains continuity of provision and supports the development of a long-term strategic relationship with the ICB.

Option 2: Do not agree the financial contribution and instead procure the provision of Speech and Language Therapy services independently. (Not recommended)

3. This option involves the Council withdrawing its financial contribution to the NWL ICB and commissioning Speech and Language Therapy services directly. This option would have an adverse impact on the financial efficiency of the service for the Local Authority and disrupt the continuity of the service for children and young people.
4. By pooling procurement activity via the NWL ICB, the Council can leverage greater market influence and secure better value for money. The Local Authority does not have sufficient volume or scale to drive market competition independently, and standalone commissioning would likely result in higher costs and reduced efficiency.
5. Some children and young people receiving Speech and Language Therapy services access both health and education provision. Contributing to the ICB enables therapist consistency and streamlines service provision across these domains. Independent commissioning would risk fragmentation of services and loss of continuity for young people accessing the service.
6. Continued contribution to the ICB supports a long-term strategic relationship that strengthens joint working and integrated service delivery. Procuring independently would undermine this collaborative approach and reduce opportunities for system-wide transformation. This option is therefore not recommended.

Option 3: Do not agree the financial contributions for the Speech and Language services, recommendations one and two. (Not recommended)

7. The Council would not be able to meet its statutory responsibilities if funding and in turn provision was to cease.

Option 4: Agree the financial contributions for the Speech and Language services (Option 1) but do not agree funding to support development of an integrated early intervention offer (Option 2). (Not recommended)

8. Whilst the Council would meet its statutory obligations through recommendation one, not approving recommendation two would significantly impact the provision of an early intervention speech and language offer detailed in paragraph three of this report. This option is therefore not recommended.

6. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS GRANTED:

None.

Date of Decision
13 November 2025