

Cabinet – 18 October 2022

Extension to Integrated Sexual Health Services Contract and Healthy Child Programme 0-5 and 5-19 Contracts with Walsall Healthcare Trust

Portfolio: Councillor Flint - Health and Wellbeing

Related portfolios: Councillor Wilson – Children’s Services

Service: Public Health

Wards: All

Key decision: Yes

Forward plan: Yes

1. Aim

- 1.1 To seek Cabinet approval to extend the provision of Walsall’s integrated sexual health service, including meeting statutory obligations, from 01 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.
- 1.2 To seek Cabinet approval to extend the provision of Walsall’s 0-5 Healthy Child Programme delivered by Walsall Healthcare Trust’s Health Visiting Service including meeting statutory obligations from 01 April 2023 to 31 September 2023 and thereafter rolling monthly to a maximum of a further 6-months until 31 March 2024.
- 1.3 To seek Cabinet approval to extend the provision of Walsall’s 5-19 Healthy Child Programme delivered by Walsall Healthcare Trust School Nursing Service including meeting statutory obligations from 01 April 2023 to 31 September 2023 and thereafter rolling monthly to a maximum of a further 6-months until 31 March 2024.
- 1.4 The report also requests a variation to the current integrated sexual health contract, delivered by Walsall Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust (WHT) intended for a 12-month period until 31st March 2024. It also requests a variation to the current Healthy Child Programme 0-5 and Healthy Child Programme 5-19 intended for a 6-month period until 31st September 2023 and thereafter rolling monthly to a maximum of a further 6-months until 31 March 2024. This will ensure the Council continues to have compliant contractual arrangements in place for the continued delivery of integrated sexual and reproductive health services, the Healthy Child Programme 0-5 and Healthy Child Programme 5-19 including meeting its statutory obligations.

2. Summary

- 2.1 The Director of Public Health is requesting Cabinet to vary and extend the integrated sexual health contract with Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust for a further 12-month term.

The Director of Public Health is requesting Cabinet to vary and extend with Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust for a further 6-month term and thereafter rolling monthly to a maximum of a further 6-months until 31 March 2024, the following contracts:

- Healthy Child Programme 0-5 contract
- Healthy Child Programme 5-19 contract

- 2.2 This will also allow public health officers sufficient time to redesign and reconfigure the services and explore future commissioning arrangements. This will include:

- Sexual Health Services – reviewing the needs of the population in a post pandemic Walsall and develop a model that recognises the role of digital online provision, targets those who are most at risk of poor sexual or reproductive health and ensures it can meet the changing needs of the population.
- Healthy Child Programme Services - ensuring the service offer meets the changing needs of families and variations to contract can be made. It also allows time to gain comprehensive stakeholder consensus around future commissioning and modernisation intentions.

- 2.3 This is a key decision because it exceeds the threshold for “significant” expenditure of £500,000 and will impact upon all council wards.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 That Cabinet approve the extension of the integrated sexual health service, contract delivered by Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust from 01 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.

- 3.2 That Cabinet approve the extension of the Healthy Child Programme 0-5 service contract delivered by Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust from 01 April 2023 to 31 September 2023 and thereafter rolling monthly to a maximum of a further 6-months until 31 March 2024.

- 3.3 That Cabinet approve the extension of the Healthy Child Programme 5 - 19 service, contract delivered by Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust from 01 April 2023 to 31 September 2023 and thereafter rolling monthly to a maximum of a further 6-months until 31 March 2024.

- 3.4 That Cabinet delegate authority to the Director of Public Health, and the Portfolio Holder for Health and Wellbeing to extend contracts on behalf of the Council, identify required conditions to justify a monthly extension and to

subsequently authorise the variations and extensions should this be required at any time during the term, in line with Public Contract Regulations and the Council's Contract Rules to 31 March 2024.

4. Report detail

Context

4.1 The local authority commissions:

- Comprehensive sexual health services including most contraceptive services and all prescribing costs, but excluding GP additionally provided contraception.
- Sexually transmitted infections (STI) testing and treatment, chlamydia screening and HIV testing.
- Specialist services, including young people's sexual health, teenage pregnancy services, outreach, HIV prevention, sexual health promotion, services in schools, college, and pharmacies.
- Health Visiting and support to quit smoking in pregnancy delivered through the Healthy Child Programme 0-5. This service includes five mandated visits to all families in the first 2 ½ years of a child's life.
- School Nursing and Teenage Pregnancy support delivered through the Healthy Child Programme 5-19. Within this is the mandated National Child Measurement programme in Reception and Year 6.

4.2 The integrated sexual health services contract start date was 01 June 2016 with options to extend by two 12-month periods until 2021.

4.3 The Healthy Child Programme 0-5 contract was awarded to Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust following the completion of a compliant procurement process, by approval of the then Director of Public Health from 01 April 2017 with the option to extend the initial term by a further two consecutive twelve month periods, from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2022.

4.4 In December 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic Cabinet agreed to extend public health commissioned services due to expire for a further 24 months, with an expiry date of March 2023. This included the integrated sexual health and Healthy Child Programme.

4.5 In addition, Cabinet also delegated authority to the Director of Public Health to enter into appropriate contractual arrangements for the continued provision of sexual health services with Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust.

4.6 On the 16th March 2022 Cabinet approved the extension of the Healthy Child Programme 0-5 contract delivered by Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust from 01 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.

- 4.7 The Healthy Child Programme 5-19 contract was awarded from 01 August 2015 to 31 July 2018 with options to extend by 2 x 12 month periods to 31 July 2020 to Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust following the completion of a compliant procurement process, by approval of the then Director of Public Health on 18 March 2015.
- 4.8 On 28th February 2019 the Healthy Child Programme 5-19 contract was varied under clause B22 and regulation 72(1) (d) (ii) of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 to include Teenage Pregnancy Services and Special Educational and Disability (SEND) Role.
- 4.9 On 17 July 2019 Cabinet delegated authority to the Director of Public Health to enter into appropriate contractual arrangements for the continued provision of Healthy Child 5- 19 services, with Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust from 31 July 2020 for a period of 18 months. Subsequently the extension from 31 July 2020 to 31 March 2022 was actioned via the appropriate delegated authority.
- 4.10 On the 16th March 2022 Cabinet approved the extension of the Healthy Child Programme 5-19 (School Nursing and Teenage Pregnancy) contract delivered by Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust from 01 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.
- 4.11 An extension to the Public Health contracts will allow Public Health officers to proceed with negotiations with the provider and stakeholders regarding significant structural changes (including open booking accounting and service modernisation) to meet the changing needs of families in this time of growing financial instability.
- 4.12 An extension will also enable Public Health officers to work with Council and partner agency colleagues to gain consensus around future commissioning arrangements and comprehensively assess the opportunities and risks of any proposed commissioning changes. This includes establishing a process and support for taking the service in house should the negotiations fail.
- 4.13 Options for Healthy Child Programme commissioning under consideration include:
- commission directly with provider under Section 75 of NHS Act 2006
 - commission via Walsall Together under S75 of NHS Act 2006
 - re-procure via a new provider
 - Consideration of in-house provision should negotiation fail
- 4.14 The Covid-19 pandemic continues to impact aspects of people's daily lives. Whilst the Council, has responded to the ever-changing challenges, it has not been possible to estimate or predict the short and long term human, financial and societal long-term impacts.

- 4.15 An extension to the Public Health contracts will allow Public Health officers to work with national and local partner agencies and Council colleagues to consider all commissioning options and comprehensively assess the opportunities and risks of a re-designed service and proposed changes.
- 4.16 There has been significant change to NHS systems recently due to the formation of Integrated care systems (ICSs) on 1 July 2022. The recently formed ICSs offers opportunities to plan and co-ordinate health and care services, including elements. There has been insufficient time to explore how this newly formed partnership can operate at a system, place and neighbourhood level.
- 4.17 Public Health are also waiting publication of several key national strategies and operational plans. This includes:
- Updated 'Integrated sexual health services: a suggested national service specification'. This will support the council in its consideration of commissioning and re-design.
 - A sexual health and reproductive health action plan from the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities. The outcomes of the action plans will inform future work in the borough.
 - More information and plans on the Women's health strategy, which focuses on a life course approach. Time is required by public health to consider the ways in which specific life events or stages of life can influence future health of the population.
- 4.18 Within the development of the new integrated sexual health service, will be a greater focus on prevention and reproductive health. Within the development of the future Healthy Child programme will be a greater focus on partnership working and combining both contracts into one with a shared management structure.
- 4.19 The Public Health team will look to learn from and build upon the positives that have emerged from the pandemic. This will include optimising opportunities to engage with stakeholders including, communities and partners whilst also responding to the need that has exacerbated during the time of lockdown and growing financial insecurity.
- 4.20 The Public Health team has already commenced actions to improve the Healthy Child Programme. These include closer working between commissioner and provider to ensure close review of the prioritisation of families. This will ensure that each family gets the support they require according to their individual needs.
- 4.21 In addition, commissioners are formally varying the contract with the provider to ensure clearer governance including open book accounting and greater clarity around risks seen in order to ensure we have a good Health Visiting offer during the extension period.

- 4.22 Plans are in place to join the Public Health Healthy Child Programme Healthy Child Programme 0-5 contract and a Healthy Child Programme 5 – 19 contract into one contract which allows more flexibility to deliver services to children, young people and families and reduced management overheads.
- 4.23 Active recruitment is underway to build the health visitor establishment which involves over recruitment to other grades of staff and of Bank Health Visitors while the permanent workforce is being developed. This ensures that there can be a return towards and evaluation of the full offer of mandated checks and other commissioned work during the extension period.
- 4.24 The Council is obliged to follow statutory guidance when commissioning services to assure itself and have evidence that contract terms and conditions are appropriate to provide the delivery of the agreed quality of care. The pandemic has required the Council to consider the impact of its own activities on the market as a whole, in particular the potential impact of its commissioning and re-commissioning decisions.
- 4.25 As a result, of the issues set out points 4.11 to 4.16, there is a requirement to award interim contracts for the above services. This is in order to ensure continuity of service provision.
- 4.26 Work with Procurement to progress the future tendering options is ongoing, along consultation with key stakeholders such as Walsall Healthcare Trust, Children's Services and Adult Social Care. Legal Services will support future tendering options.
- 4.27 Therefore, the recommendations of this report will ensure that the Council is compliant with its responsibilities under its Contract Rules.

Council Plan priorities

- 4.28 All the Council Plan priorities continue to be supported by extending the contract on a temporary basis while considering the best model to deliver an integrated sexual and reproductive health service and Healthy Child Programmes, to reduce inequalities and make the most of potential.
- Enable greater local opportunities for all people, communities and businesses.
 - Encourage our residents to: lead more active, fulfilling and independent lives and maintain or improve their health and wellbeing.
 - Council services are customer focused, effective, efficient and fair.
 - Children have the best start in life, are safe from harm, happy, healthy and learning well.
 - Empower our communities so that they feel connected and that they belong in Walsall. Create safe and healthy places whilst building a strong sense of community.

Risk management

- 4.29 The award of contract extensions will ensure that the Council is compliant with its Contract Rules and able to respond compliantly to local demand. The award will also ensure the Council can meet the statutory Public Health duties and requirements within the integrated sexual health service.

Financial implications

- 4.30 Since the transfer of public health into the local authority in 2013, there has been two budget reductions to the sexual health contract.

- 2015/16 there was a £350k reduction prior to contract award
- 2018/19 there was a £500k reduction

- 4.31 The biggest impact has been to upstream, primary prevention services. These work to promote safe sexual behaviour and offer outreach services. This not only affects individual patients but also put the general population at greater risk of infection.

- 4.32 Any further reduction to the budget could result in waiting times increasing, and patient experience deteriorating. It could also impact on the Council's ability to provide an open access and safe service, that meets demand and respond to unforeseen outbreaks.

- 4.33 Since the transfer of public health into the local authority in 2013, there have been three budget reductions within the Healthy Child Programme.

- 2015/16 there was a £200k reduction prior to the 5-19 contract award
- 2017/18 there was a £1.48mill reduction prior to 0-5 contract award
- 2018/20 there was a £500k reduction in the 0-5 contract

- 4.34 Any further reduction to budget could result in fewer universal mandated visits and further difficulty in recruitment of qualified Public Health Nurses.

- 4.35 The recommendations (section 3), to extend existing contractual arrangements, will be implemented with no change to the current contractual values. The current contract value for the sexual health service is £1.77m per annum and for the Healthy Child Programme is £4.80m. As a result, no additional costs are incurred in approving the recommendations set out in this report.

Legal implications

- 4.36 Public Health have liaised with Procurement Services to ensure that extension of the current contractual arrangements as described is in accordance with Public Contracts Regulations 2015; Regulation 72(1), will be carried out compliantly and using legally binding methods and meet procurement regulations.

Procurement Implications/Social Value

- 4.37 All Public Health contracts include a specific clause on Social Value.
- 4.38 All provider agencies are required through performance monitoring processes to demonstrate how they offer Social Value in economic, environmental and/or social benefits to their employees and local residents. The Council's Social Value Toolkit is used as a guide.

Property implications

- 4.39 There are no property implications arising out of this report.

Health and wellbeing implications

- 4.40 Continuing to commission these services will enable the Council to promote health and wellbeing for Walsall residents and fully contribute to the Council's priorities impacting upon all residents across their life.
- 4.41 Key to the Councils' response to Covid-19 is mitigating the health and wellbeing impact of the pandemic. Covid-19 is having a long-term impact on our residents' health and wellbeing. It is the intention of the Council and Public Health to understand this impact and review services based on this learning.
- 4.42 The principles and actions contained within this report are in full accordance with the Marmot objectives because service users will have increased independence, improved health and can positively contribute to their communities and benefit from a safe and healthy environment.

Reducing Inequalities

- 4.43 Engagement with target groups and potential service users, including groups that share a "protected characteristic"; will be undertaken as part of the service design process. This will inform the changes to service delivery to ensure that potential adverse or negative consequences are minimised or eliminated and that positive impacts are maximised. The Equality Analysis will also be updated following this work, at the start of the new financial year.
- 4.44 The service specifications will include a requirement to identify and provide services that meet any specific needs of protected groups as identified in analysis and to share data and actively participate in the evaluation of the services so that access and outcomes among protected groups can be monitored.
- 4.45 It will also detail the requirement to undertake engagement work with target groups, the wider community and NHS services and organisations working with these populations. This will help to minimise barriers, improve engagement for people with more complex needs and actively tackle health and wellbeing inequalities.

Staffing implications

4.46 There are no staffing implications arising out of this report.

Climate Impact

4.47 The environmental impact of the proposed agreement is limited however the intention to provide an improved digital offer for sexual health services and to explore more local and community-focused services is likely to have a positive environmental impact. It will contribute towards a reduction in car, motorcycle and taxi journeys among service users.

Consultation

4.48 Consultation will take place as part of the service re-designs to put residents and other key stakeholders at the centre of the service, which is based on assessed needs.

5. Decide

Cabinet is requested to consider the proposal to extend the integrated sexual health contract and the Healthy Child Programme 0-5 and 5-19 as set out in the report and to agree the recommendations as outlined in section 3.

6. Respond

Subject to Cabinet approval of the recommendations, Public Health will work with corporate colleagues to:

- a. Progress the award of extended contracts.
- b. Complete a review and re-procurement of the service during the contract extension period.

7. Review

7.1 Once awarded and fully commissioned, the extended contracts will be reviewed in line with contract management and individual support plan review process.

7.2. Public Health will return to Cabinet in 2023 to seek approval to set a new commissioning process into place for the new integrated sexual and reproductive health service and the Healthy Child Programme 0-5 and 5-19.

Appendices

None

Background papers

None

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