

REPORT TO: Executive Board
DATE: 18 March 2021
REPORTING OFFICER: Director of Public Health
PORTFOLIO: Health & Wellbeing
SUBJECT: Substance Misuse Service Waiver Request
WARD(S) Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To seek a waiver in compliance with Procurement Standing Order 1.14.4 (v) of part 3, for the granting of a Direct Award for the delivery of a Substance Misuse Service from 1 April 2021 to 30 September 2021.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That Members of the Executive Board:

- i) Note the contents of the report; and**
- ii) Approve a waiver in compliance with Procurement Standing Order 1.14.4 (v) of part 3, for the granting of a Direct Award for the delivery of a Substance Misuse Service from 1 April 2021 to 30 September 2021.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Halton Borough Council is responsible for commissioning services to support local people with substance (drugs and alcohol) misuse problems. The overall aim of this service is to improve health and social care outcomes, reduce the harm from addiction to legal and illicit substances and reduce health inequalities for local people.

3.2 The provision of an effective specialist community substance misuse service contributes towards the aim of the Safer Halton Partnership to ensure Halton is a pleasant, safe and secure place to live and work with attractive, safe surroundings, good quality local amenities and the ability of people to enjoy life where they live. The service also contributes towards the aim of the Halton Health and Wellbeing Board by promoting the health and wellbeing of all service users and their families and reducing alcohol-related harm locally.

3.3 In September 2015 the Executive Board granted authority to the Director of Public Health to carry out all necessary steps in relation to the open tendering and commissioning of Specialist Community

Substance Misuse services. The contract was awarded in line with Halton Borough Council's Procurement Policy to Change, Grow, Live (CGL) for a fixed period of five years and is due to end on 31st March 2021, with no contractual arrangement for extension.

3.4 It had been anticipated that a full procurement exercise would have taken place during 2020 to enable a new contract to be in place. However, the impact of the covid pandemic has placed a significant strain on the capacity of both providers and the wider public health and council workforce.

3.5 In addition, the Council has not sought to destabilise the current provision of essential services to some of the Boroughs most vulnerable clients during this difficult time.

3.6 The Government has also recently announced a programme of additional investment of £80million pounds to be shared and allocated to Local Authorities to improve access to drug treatment. We are awaiting the local allocation which will have significant implications on the services that we are able to commission and inform the development of a new service specification.

3.7 This report seeks a waiver of the Council's Standing Orders to directly award a contract for a six month period for the continued delivery of the specialist substance misuse service. This will enable the provision of essential public health services, whilst at the same time enable approval to be sought to commence the formal procurement of a new contract as part of an open and transparent process.

3.8 This award via a waiver is sought on the following basis:

- To prevent disruption to the delivery of important and mandated services.
- CGL is the current provider of services currently working on behalf of Halton Borough Council.
- CGL offer value for money to the Council as the largest regional provider of services which enables projects and services to be organised at scale that would be otherwise unaffordable for individual local authorities.
- The extension will enable the delivery of a formal procurement process to secure a new contract for the delivery of this essential service.

3.9 A waiver in compliance of Procurement Standing Order 1.14.4 (v) of part 3 is sought to award CGL (Change, Grow, Live) a contract for a six month period from 1st April 2021 to 30th September 2021.

4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 These services are commissioned in pursuance of the local

authority's statutory responsibility to improve the health and well-being of the local population through the delivery of specialist Public Health advice and the continued access to health improvement services for residents in Halton. The method of procurement complies with the Council's Procurement Standing Orders and Public Contract Regulations 2015. The service objectives are in line with the Health and Wellbeing and Clinical Commissioning Group Priorities.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The provision of substance misuse services and functions is an essential element of the Public Health Grant and the resources are included in the ring fenced budget. It is anticipated that the budget will not exceed £650,000 for the six month period.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children & Young People in Halton

The proposal supports the delivery of the Health & Wellbeing Strategy and elements of the Children's Plan.

6.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

Employment, Learning and Skills is a key determinant of health and wellbeing and is therefore a key consideration when developing strategies to address health inequalities.

6.3 A Healthy Halton

The proposal supports the council's delivery of the Health and Wellbeing strategy and contributes to the achievement of the council's outcomes, including population health and reducing health inequalities as outlined in the priorities contained in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA).

6.4 A Safer Halton

The service contributes to a Safer Halton by supporting local people in reducing risk taking behaviour, such as alcohol, drugs, etc. Community services also play an important role in reducing crime and anti-social behaviour

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None identified.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 There is a significant risk to the health and wellbeing of the local population if access to local substance misuse services are disrupted. The waiver will ensure the continued provision of essential services and enable a formal procurement to take place in an open and transparent way.

8.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is not required for this report.

9.0 **REASON(S) FOR DECISION**

A decision is required as the outcome will result in the local authority incurring expenditure which is significant; and is significant in terms of its effects on communities.

10.0 **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED**

At this stage alternative options have not been considered.

11.0 **IMPLEMENTATION DATE**

1st April 2021

12.0 **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

None.