

REPORT TO: Executive Board
DATE: 20 January 2022
REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, People
PORTFOLIO: Adult Social Care
SUBJECT: Halton Self-Advocacy Service
WARD(S) Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To seek approval of a waiver of Parts 2 and 3 of Procurement Standing Orders 1.14.4 to make a Direct Award to Halton Speak Out for the provision of a Self-Advocacy Service.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That:

- i) In compliance with Standing Order 1.14.4, Executive Board approve a direct award to Halton Speak Out for the provision of a Self-Advocacy Service.**
- ii) Executive Board notes the change in service delivery model**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Halton Speak Out currently works in borough with adults and young people with learning disabilities to deliver person-centred planning, self-advocacy support and undertake consultation.

The current Adult's service was commissioned in 2015 to provide support services to adults with learning disabilities, and includes the following three elements;

- Person centred planning co-ordination and facilitation
- Self-advocacy service and
- Facilitation of Halton's People's Cabinet

3.2 The current contract was due to end in March 2017, and the contract has been extended on a year by year basis since then.

3.3 Halton Speak Out is a registered charity, and in addition to their commissioned service they also provide the Ella Academy Performing Arts Group and have taken over the management of Brookvale Community Centre.

- 3.4 Halton Speak Out are established in borough as a local specialist provider with existing links with the learning disability community and partners in Halton, and as such are considered to be the only suitable organisation to deliver this service.

It is accepted that the service has evolved since the original contract was put in place, and a new service delivery model is required to ensure the service continues to meet the needs of self-advocates and fills any gaps in local provision.

- 3.5 Changes in social care practice has seen strengths based approaches to social care assessments, providing holistic assessments that focus on the wider support networks and community support.

As person centred approaches are already embedded within other service areas, the new service will no longer include the person centred planning element.

It is proposed that Halton Speak Out undertake work with commissioned support providers prior to the new service starting to ensure these approaches are embedded within their services.

- 3.6 Halton Speak Out has already been consulted about a new service model and given their initial views on how the service should be delivered moving forwards.

The new service will continue to provide self-advocacy support and undertake consultation, and will be co-produced with Halton Speak Out and self-advocates. This will give the opportunity to focus on innovative service delivery and outcomes, while ensuring it continues to meet the need of self-advocates.

The service will provide a mechanism to link into the governance arrangements for learning disability services.

A new Learning Disability Strategy is currently being developed through the Partnership Board and its sub-groups. The service will be instrumental in ensure self-advocate voices are included and inform the strategy.

- 3.7 It is proposed to award a contract for 5 years from April 2022 to March 2027. The current contract has been extended on a yearly basis and the award of a 5 year contract will give the provider financial stability and the opportunity for a new service delivery model to be firmly embedded.

4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 None identified.

5.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 The current annual contract value is £73,439 for 82 direct support hours plus admin support and management hours.

As the service will no longer be delivering the person centred planning element, it is proposed to reduce the contract value to £37,000 as it is expected the service will be delivered by one full-time equivalent worker.

The underspend on the current budget will be utilised to cover other statutory duties contracted out where the identified budget is insufficient to meet the cost.

6.0 **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

6.1 **Children & Young People in Halton**

The service will continue to support young people in transition.

6.2 **Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton**

The service will support and empower self-advocates to access education, training and employment opportunities.

6.3 **A Healthy Halton**

Self-advocates will be supported to access appropriate services.

6.4 **A Safer Halton**

The service will safeguard adults with learning disabilities by supporting individuals to link with agencies, services and initiatives around personal safety.

6.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal**

None identified.

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 Financial risk will be minimised by delivering the service within existing budget.

7.2 As Halton Speak Out receive additional funding from the other services delivered in borough, it is considered the organisation has the infrastructure to support a reduced service.

7.3 The contract will comply with the Council's Standing Orders in relation to procurement and will be monitored in line with the Council's Quality Assurance framework to ensure contractual requirements are met with regard to quality, performance and outcomes.

8.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 The support provider will be required to demonstrate they embrace and comply with the Equality Act.

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

9.1 None under the meaning of the Act.