

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 25 February 2025

REPORTING OFFICER: Executive Director Adults

PORTFOLIO: Adult Social Care

SUBJECT: Support at Home service in Halton – British Red Cross

WARD(S) Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To consider the Support at Home service in Halton, contracted with British Red Cross, and consider contract renewal, through a direct award, for a further three years following the current contract end date.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

- 1) Note the contents of the report; and**
- 2) Approve a Waiver in compliance with Procurement Standing Order 1.14.4 iv of part 3 of Procurement Standing Orders, for a direct award to support the continuation of the provision of the Support at Home service in Halton delivered through contract with British red Cross for the period from 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2028.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Overview

3.1.1 The British Red Cross run Support at Home services across the UK. The service provides one-to-one short term support for up to six weeks to increase a person's resilience and independence following illness, injury, hospital admission or other crisis. The service is aimed at giving them the confidence to continue with their daily lives.

3.1.2 The service is a key contributor to the local authority's duty under the Care Act 2014 to prevent and delay the need for greater intervention and services. This compliments the Directorate's position on prevention as set out in the [Adult Social Care Prevention Strategy 2023-2027](#). It, furthermore, supports hospital discharge, and prevents admission, and as such attract a proportion of funding from

the Better Care Fund.

3.1.3 Operating on a 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday basis the service employs a small team of three support workers to offer:

- Escorted shopping
- Emotional wellbeing support
- Preparation of the home for hospital discharge
- Supported appointments
- Companionship and confidence building
- Assistance with paperwork
- 'Safe and Well' checks
- Signposting and guidance
- Telephone support
- Assistance with meals
- Case liaison (e.g. hospital, GP, social care)
- Assistance with mobility

3.1.4 The service has a regular presence in the community, promoting their offer through events, activities and other community-based and voluntary sector organisations. The team also have regular contact and attendance at both Warrington and Whiston hospitals, liaising with discharge teams to support clients.

3.1.5 The overarching aims of the Support at Home services are to:

- Reduce delaying the transfer of care from health to social care for people who are medically fit and do not need to occupy a hospital bed by providing support following discharge, on return home (or place of residence)
- Ensure the service user is settled comfortably back into their home with immediate needs met and access to food, warmth, and low level support.
- Take active steps to reduce any immediate risks in the service user's home and reduce the likelihood of being returned to hospital.
- Reduce the risk of admission, re-admission to hospital or residential care admission by making referrals for both short-term and longer-term support.
- Ensure service users are encouraged to access and linked to information or other services and networks which may reduce anxiety and enhance ability to continue living independently in their home.

3.1.6 A breakdown of service outcomes is given at **Appendix One**. This includes two case studies showing impacts on individuals.

3.2 **Service contract**

- 3.2.1 The current contract was issued on 1st April 2022 and ran for 2 years, with an option to extend for a further 12-months. This extension was invoked and the current contract comes to an end on 31st March 2025.
- 3.2.2 Prior contracts for the Support at Home service go back to 2018, and prior to this the service was delivered under the title: 'Home from Hospital'. The service therefore has a long-standing relationship with the borough and established links across its communities.
- 3.2.3 The current contract value is £77,675.88 per annum, remaining unchanged over the 3-year term of the contract. Rises in operating costs during this period have been assessed and an increase to the contract value of £86,671 is recommended and fixed for the duration of the contract in 2025 – 2028.
- 3.2.4 The total cost of the contract over the three-year term would be £260,013 (based on an annual contract value of £86,671). The current contract is funded via the core adult social care budget, with a small percentage (circa. 10%) being funded via the Better Care Fund and can be met within existing budget allocations.
- 3.2.5 Should Members decide to continue with the service, a waiver in compliance with Procurement Standing Order 1.14.4 iv of part 3 of Procurement Standing Orders would be needed to cover the period 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2028.

4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The service forms part of the Adult Social Care offer of provision and meets statutory requirements in relation to the Care Act 2014. It impacts on prevention and delay of need and also support hospital discharge processes.
- 4.2 The British Red Cross have a long-standing relationship with the Council, offering added-value in relation to their association with the national British Red Cross branding and campaigns.

5.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 A waiver in compliance with Procurement Standing Order 1.14.4 iv of part 3 of Procurement Standing Orders would be needed to cover a contract spanning the period 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2028. The total value of the contract would be £260,013. Of this amount 88% would be allocated to core adult social care budget, equating to £228,811.44, while the remaining £31,201.56 would be covered by the Better Care Fund.

6.0 **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES** ([click here for list of priorities](#))

6.1 **Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence**

Through this contract the British Red Cross works with those who require short-term interventions and support in order to retain or regain their independence.

6.2 **Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy**

The service prevents and delays the need for social care support, reducing the reliance on public services.

6.3 **Supporting Children, Young People and Families**

No direct impact.

6.4 **Tackling Inequality and Helping Those Who Are Most In Need**

This service makes an important contribution to the health and social care system in Halton, supporting people at times of vulnerability.

6.5 **Working Towards a Greener Future**

No direct impact

6.6 **Valuing and Appreciating Halton and Our Community**

The service is based in the community and supports people to access community facilities.

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 Losing the service would impact on both social care and health services as people would be at risk of needing more complex interventions, including hospital admission.

8.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 The service is open to all adults across the borough regardless of circumstances.

9.0 **CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 There are no environmental or climate implications as a result of this report.

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

10.1 'None under the meaning of the Act.'