

Nottingham City Council Delegated Decision



Nottingham
City Council

Reference Number:

4002

Author:

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Department:

Children and Adults

Contact:

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Subject:

The Wellbeing at Home Volunteer Service

Total Value:

£121,028 (Type: Revenue)

Decision Being Taken:

- 1) To approve the continuation of the Wellbeing at Home Volunteer Service for a period of 1 year from 1 October 2020, including expenditure of up to a maximum of £121,028.
- 2) To approve dispensation from Contract Procedure Rule 4.1.2, in accordance with Financial Regulation 3.29 (Operational Issues), to extend the Wellbeing at Home Volunteer Service pilot with Age UK Nottingham and Nottinghamshire for a period of 1 year from 1 October 2020.
- 3) To delegate authority to the Director of Commissioning and Procurement to enter into the contract, and to the Head of Contracting and Procurement to sign the contract with the service provider.

Reasons for the Decision(s)

The purpose of the Wellbeing at Home Volunteer Service is to ensure fewer delayed transfers of care and improve the flow through the homecare system. The Service benefits from the support of volunteers, providing additional benefits such as alleviating social isolation and increasing community engagement. These outcomes are proven to be a preventative factor in helping to avoid deterioration of health that could lead to subsequent hospital admissions. The Service delivers value for money for the Council and has a proven track record of creating essential capacity within the homecare market. It is unlikely that a provider other than Age UK Nottingham and Nottinghamshire would be able to deliver a similar service from the 1 October without destabilising the model and having a significant impact on the service delivery. The Service fits with the aims of Better Lives Better Outcomes (Nottingham City's Adult Social Care strategy) in promoting healthy lifestyles; intervening early when a person's wellbeing is at risk; maintaining independence, skills and resilience; supporting access to community resources; and supporting people to make choices about their lives.

The current service ends in September 2020 and Coronavirus has meant that it has not been possible to carry out the market development work that would have been crucial in order to carry out a full procurement exercise. Coronavirus has also changed the context within which the service is currently delivered. As we do not yet know what the landscape within the market will look like, the only reasonable option open to the Council is to extend the current contract. This will give time for the current situation to settle and allow appropriate consideration to be given to what longer term service may be required.

The Service will be funded through the Winter Pressures grant funding, which will be included within the Better Care Fund (BCF) allocation for Nottingham City Council. This is short-term funding that will allow for a one year extension. Guidance has been clear that although BCF plans from April 2020 will not have been formally approved, for the duration of the current outbreak of Coronavirus, systems should assume that spending from ring-fenced BCF funds, particularly on existing schemes from 2019-20, and spending on activity to address demands in community health and social care, is approved and should prioritise continuity of care, maintaining social care services and system resilience. Once the full BCF allocation has been confirmed, a report with full details of how the funding will be allocated will be taken to Commissioning and Procurement Sub-Committee, with the continuation of the Wellbeing at Home Volunteer Service included within it.

Other Options Considered:

1) Go out to the market with a full procurement exercise: Coronavirus has meant that the market development work required for this has not been possible, providers have not had the capacity to commit to a procurement exercise, and there is uncertainty about what the market looks like, currently. This option is rejected for these reasons. 2) Do nothing: this is not a viable option as the current contract expires in September and new arrangements are required for this essential service to continue.

Background Papers:

None

Published Works:

None

Affected Wards:

Citywide

Colleague / Councillor Interests:	None
Dispensation from Financial Regulations:	Yes
Consultations:	Those not consulted are not directly affected by the decision.
Crime and Disorder Implications:	None
Equality:	EIA not required. Reasons: An EIA is not required because this decision represents a continuation of existing activities. Any proposal for changes to the Service will be subject to an EIA.
Social Value Considerations:	Not applicable.
Regard for NHS Constitution:	Local Authorities have a statutory duty to have regard to the NHS Constitution when exercising their public health functions under the NHS Act 2006. In making this decision relating to public health functions, the NHS Constitution has been properly considered where applicable and has been taken into account on how it can be applied in order to commission services to improve the health of the local community.
Decision Type:	Portfolio Holder
Subject to Call In:	Yes
Call In Expiry date:	07/10/2020
Advice Sought:	Legal, Finance, Procurement

Legal Advice:

The proposals in this report seek to extend the existing trial with Age UK to enable continued delivery of the service, which has proved successful in the city. The trial has previously been extended but, due to the nature of the services, the existing uncertainty of the funding available and the continued need for the services, as well as the additional impact of the Coronavirus pandemic, it is believed a tender process at this time for such a short period of time would be unsuccessful and would result in unnecessary additional cost and resource implications. The services are considered to be light touch under the procurement regulations and the value of the extension will still fall below the threshold for these services. For these reasons, a dispensation from the Contract Procedure Rules at this is supported. As advised previously, consideration of the future requirements of the service should be done in a timely manner with a view to a compliant procurement process being undertaken in due course. Legal services will support as necessary.

Advice provided by Dionne Claire Sreaton (Solicitor) on 01/09/2020.

Finance Advice:

This decision seeks approval to extend the current Wellbeing at Home Volunteer Service with Age UK Nottingham and Nottinghamshire for a period of 1 year from 1 October 2020. The total cost of this decision, £121,000, will be funded from the 2020-21 Winter Pressures grant funding, which will be subject to a separate joint approval process with Nottingham City Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). The Winter Pressures grant now forms part of the wider Better Care Fund (BCF) grant. We are expecting to receive the national 2020-21 planning template shortly, which will be completed in partnership with Nottingham City CCG. The template, once complete, will go to Nottingham City Health and Wellbeing Board for formal approval, before being returned to NHS England.

Extract from NHS England website:

"Although BCF plans from April 2020 will not have been formally approved, for the duration of the current outbreak of COVID-19, systems should assume that spending from ringfenced BCF funds, particularly on existing schemes from 2019-20 and spending on activity to address demands in community health and social care, is approved and should prioritise continuity of care, maintaining social care services and system resilience."

The Wellbeing at Home Volunteer Service provided by Age UK Nottingham and Nottinghamshire has been funded from the Winter Pressures grant for the past 2 years, however, if there are any changes to the grant conditions this year that means this decision can no longer be funded from the grant in-year, the service must identify alternative funding to fully mitigate this expenditure across Adult Social Care ensuring there is no adverse impact on the Council budget. The existing arrangement with Age UK Nottingham and Nottinghamshire is considered to offer value for money and has a proven track record of creating essential capacity within the homecare market. It is unlikely that another provider would be able to deliver a similar service from 1 October without destabilising the model and having a significant impact on the service delivery.

This decision seeks dispensation from Contract Procedure Rule 4.1.2 in accordance with Financial Regulation (3.29) to award the contract extension to Age UK Nottingham and Nottinghamshire to deliver the service pilot mentioned above for 1 year from 1 October 2020. Given the successful delivery of the service to date and for reasons detailed by the report author, this is deemed appropriate in this instance.

Advice provided by Hayley Mason (Strategic Finance Business Partner) on 24/08/2020.

Procurement Advice:

The decision to dispense with Contract Procedure Rule 4.1.2 in accordance with Financial Regulation 3.29 (Operational Issues) in order to extend the Wellbeing at Home Volunteer Service pilot with Age UK Nottingham and Nottinghamshire for a period of 1 year from 1 October 2020 is supported by the Procurement Team, on this occasion. It is advised that the service should be reviewed during this period and, if deemed to be an ongoing requirement, it should be procured through an open procurement process to ensure best value and compliance with procurement regulations. Procurement of the service would be supported by the Procurement Team.

Advice provided by Nicola Harrison (Procurement Lead Officer) on 01/09/2020.

Signatures

Adele Williams (Portfolio Holder for Adult Care & Local Transport)

SIGNED and Dated: 28/09/2020

Catherine Underwood (Corporate Director for People)

SIGNED and Dated: 22/09/2020

Laura Pattman (Strategic Director of Finance) - Dispensation from Financial Regulations

SIGNED and Dated: 14/09/2020

Chief Finance Officer's Comments: