

North Somerset Council

REPORT TO THE COUNCIL

DATE OF MEETING: 22ND SEPTEMBER 2020

SUBJECT OF REPORT: 0-19 PUBLIC HEALTH NURSING COMMISSIONING PLAN

TOWN OR PARISH: N/A

OFFICER/MEMBER PRESENTING: MATT LENNY, DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH

KEY DECISION: YES

REASON: THE TOTAL VALUE OF THIS CONTRACT AWARD IS OVER £500,000

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the commissioning plan is approved so detailed procurement planning and preparation can proceed.

1. SUMMARY OF REPORT

Local authorities are responsible for commissioning public health nursing services for children aged 0-19 years. These services contribute to the council's ambition of improving outcomes for children and young people and reducing inequalities through supporting children to have the best start in life.

The current contract for 0-19 public health nursing services in North Somerset is with Sirona Care and Health C.I.C and runs until the end of March 2022.

This commissioning plan summarises the proposed process for securing the provision of these services from 1st April 2022 onwards. It is recommended that a competitive procurement process is followed for awarding the contract for 0-19 public health nursing services from 1st April 2022 – 31st March 2027 (five-years), with the option of a further two-year extension (ending 31st March 2029).

2. POLICY

2A. NATIONAL POLICY CONTEXT

The national Healthy Child Programme (HCP) 0-19 was set out in 2009 and is an evidence-based universal programme available to all children and aims to ensure that every child gets the good start they need to lay the foundations of a healthy life.

The 0-5 element of the HCP is led by health visiting services and the 5-19 element is led by school nursing services, with input from other partners as appropriate. The universal reach of the HCP provides an invaluable opportunity from early in a child's life to identify families that are in need of additional support and children who are at risk of poor outcomes.

The [Health and Social Care Act 2012](#) sets out a local authority's statutory responsibility for delivering and commissioning public health services for children and young people aged 5-19 years. This also includes the requirement to provide for the weighing and measuring of certain children through the National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP).

Responsibility for children's public health commissioning for 0-5 year olds, specifically health visiting, transferred from NHS England to local authorities in October 2015. Regulation requires that all families with babies receive five health visitor checks before their child reaches 2 and a half years old.

The following policy and guidance documents are relevant to the commissioning and provision of the HCP and 0-19 public health services:

- [Healthy Child Programme 0 to 19: health visitor and school nurse commissioning](#) (PHE, 2016)
- [Healthy Child Programme: Pregnancy and the first five years of life](#) (DH/DCSF, 2009)
- [Healthy Child Programme: From 5-19 years old](#) (DH/DCSF, 2009)
- [Healthy Child Programme Rapid review to update evidence](#) (PHE, 2015)
- [Healthy Child Programme: Rapid review on safeguarding to inform the Healthy Child Programme 5 to 19](#) (DH/DCSF, 2018)
- [Supporting public health: children, young people and families](#) (PHE, 2018)

Note, an update to the HCP is expected to be published by Public Health England (PHE) by the end of March 2021. Any changes to the programme as a result of this anticipated update will need to be reflected in the subsequent commissioning documents for this service.

2B. LOCAL POLICY CONTEXT

One of the three key areas of the [North Somerset Council Corporate Plan 2020-24](#) is to reduce inequalities and promote fairness and opportunity for everyone. One of the priorities sitting under this vision is specifically to adopt 'a collaborative way of working with partners and families to support children to achieve their full potential'. Commissioning high quality 0-19 public health nursing services will contribute to the improved health and wellbeing for local children and families and reduction in health inequalities through universal provision and targeted support.

The Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire (BNSSG) Sustainability and Transformation Partnership (STP) 'Healthier Together' is due to publish its [Local Long Term Plan](#) in Autumn 2020 in response to the national NHS Long Term Plan which was published in January 2019. One of the key areas of focus for the Local Plan should be around 'making sure everyone gets the best start in life', and this should be reflected in the development of the 0-19 public health nursing service specification.

We will take into account the emerging Health and Wellbeing Strategy for North Somerset, which will be completed by the start of the new service.

3. DETAILS

North Somerset Council currently has a contract with Sirona Care and Health C.I.C (Sirona) to provide 0-19 public health nursing services to North Somerset children and their families. This contract is for two years; running from 1st Apr 2020 – 31st Mar 2022. This two-year contract was directly awarded to Sirona in December 2019 under exceptional circumstances as a result of the previous provider, North Somerset Community Partnership (NSCP), terminating the contract for these services early.

This proposal is to recommission 0-19 public health nursing services for service delivery from 1st April 2022 through a competitive procurement process.

It is recommended the service is commissioned for five years (60 months) until March 2027, with option of an additional two-year (24 month) extension until March 2029. This timeline will allow us to review opportunities for future collaboration with neighbouring local authorities in Bristol and South Gloucestershire, BNSSG CCG, and/or NHS England. The contracts for the respective children's health services that these organisations commission currently run until the end of March 2027.

The current annual contract value of the 0-19 public health nursing service is £3,577,359 - therefore the estimated maximum total value of the contract is £25,042,000 over seven years.

The following table provides a high-level timeline for the proposed commissioning process:

PREPARATION AND MARKET ENGAGEMENT:	Jul - Dec 2020
PROCUREMENT START DATE:	Jan 2021
EVALUATION:	Apr - May 2021
AWARD NOTIFICATION:	Jun - Jul 2021
CONTRACT START DATE:	1 st Apr 2022

The route to market is likely to be Restricted with Negotiation, but a final decision on this will be made after the market engagement and will be approved via the Procurement Plan.

Any change in provider following the contract award will require staff to TUPE transfer to the new organisation, therefore this timeline will provide enough time to facilitate the transfer process.

4. CONSULTATION

The following stakeholder engagement activities are planned to take place during the preparation phase to help inform the development of the future model of service delivery that can best serve the needs of children and families in North Somerset:

1. **Service users and the community (this includes children, young people, their families, schools and early years providers)** – Consultation with service users and the local community is planned through online surveys and questionnaires, and through running a series of virtual online workshops from Oct-Nov 2020.
2. **Council Members and Scrutiny** – A joint workshop will be organised to take place in October 2020 for the members of the health and children's scrutiny panels. This will provide an opportunity to brief both scrutiny panels and allow the members to contribute to the development of the service specification.
3. **Council Directors and Managers** – A briefing will be provided for both the councils Corporate Leadership Team and the People and Communities Directorate Leadership Team during the preparation phase.
4. **Council Officers** - Engagement from officers from will be achieved through running a workshop with managers and staff from partner services and teams, including Children's Social Care, Education Team, Early Years Team, Children's Centres, Public Health and the Children's Transformation Programme.

5. **Partner organisations** – Conversation will be held with children’s health service commissioners from BNSSG CCG and Bristol and South Gloucestershire Council’s Public Health Teams to ensure our commissioning plans align as much as is reasonably possible across BNSSG.
6. **Staff from the service** - During 2019 there was good engagement with staff from the previous service provider around the potential future model of service delivery. This learning will be revisited and incorporated into the development of the new specification for the service.
7. **Potential Suppliers** – A Prior Information Notice (PIN) for the service procurement has been published on the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU) and in Contracts Finder. Market consultation activities will include having individual discussions with interested suppliers and organising a Supplier Day in November 2020.

These activities will inform the detail of the Procurement Plan, which will set out detailed timescales and processes for the procurement.

A comprehensive 0-19 Health Needs Assessment was completed for North Somerset in 2019 - this will be reviewed, and key data updated where required, to ensure we develop options for future ways of working based on population needs and evidence of how to achieve the best possible outcomes.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5A. COSTS

The current annual contract value of the 0-19 public health nursing service is £3,577,359 - therefore the estimated maximum total value of the contract is £25,042,000 over seven years.

5B. FUNDING

Funding for this service comes through the public health ring-fenced grant issued to the Council by Public Health England each year on behalf of the Department of Health and Social Care.

The public health ring-fenced grant is currently only confirmed until the end of 2020/21, therefore the future funding allocations for 2021/22 onwards are not known. However, it is a reasonable assumption that the duty to provide the service will remain with the Council with appropriate funding to support that service responsibility.

6. LEGAL POWERS AND IMPLICATIONS

The Health and Social Care Act, 2012, set out several duties for local authorities around improving public health. Children’s public health services are one of the mandated services that must be funded from the public health grant.

The Council will be required to comply with Public Contracts Regulations 2015, further detail on the route to market will be provided in the Procurement Plan.

Specific contract terms and conditions will be developed with the support of Legal Services.

7. CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

The service is based on community provision of specialist public health nursing which often requires travel between client’s homes and other community venues e.g. schools and Children’s Centres. Consideration of the climate impact of the service, and the potential to reduce carbon emissions, will be considered as part of the development of the service specification and scoring criteria for the

procurement. There will be some learning that can be taken from the virtual delivery of services during the current COVID19 pandemic which will be explored during the future service design.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

The key risks to fulfilling the proposed commissioning plan include:

1. **The ongoing impact of the COVID19 pandemic** – This service procurement will be a key priority over the next 18 months however any further spikes in COVID19 infections locally will have a direct impact on the time availability of the Public Health Team and other stakeholders to focus on the required procurement activities.

The pandemic may continue to affect the delivery model of the 0-19 public health nursing services whilst national guidance to keep staff, children and families safe need to stay in place. Any new service models that are developed may need to consider the new ways of working that have been developed as a response to the pandemic and any lessons learnt.

Longer-term we may see increasing need in the population as a result of the negative health and economic impacts of the pandemic. For example, it is expected there may be an increase in mental health needs across the population. These emerging needs will need to be considered as part of the service specification development.

2. **The uncertainty of the public health ring-fenced grant** – As mentioned in section 5, the local authority public health ring-fenced grant has only been confirmed until the end of March 2021. Therefore, this commissioning plan will need to be based on the assumption that there will not be any significant reductions in the grant over the time of the new service contract. The contract spend will not exceed the grant allocation.
3. **Brexit** – Brexit may have impacts on the economy which in turn may affect the level of need in the population and the viability and appetite to bid of potential service providers.
4. **Climate** – The service could make a positive contribution to the North Somerset ambition of becoming carbon neutral by 2030. There is an opportunity for the new service provider to help contribute to this target, however this may require changes to the current model of service delivery, which may not be acceptable to stakeholders and will need to be explored during the preparation phase.

9. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

A Stage 1 Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) has been completed and has been sent to the Council Equalities Lead for review - attached in appendix 1. Due to the nature of the service the EIA shows the needs of both children and women going through pregnancy are particular areas of focus.

10. CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Proposals to develop a new model for children's public health services will be developed with input from a range of teams working with children, young people and families from within the council as described in section 4.

There may also be implications on Council Facilities as one of the health visiting teams is currently co-located in a Children's Centre, as well as the wider service having a small number of desks in Castlewood.

11. OPTIONS CONSIDERED

The main options for the future provision of 0-19 public health nursing services are:

A. Complete a competitive procurement exercise.

This is the recommended option so the council adheres to procurement law. This commissioning plan specifics the planned activities to create the right conditions for a good outcome. This includes engaging with a wide range of stakeholders in the preparation phase and to carrying market testing to develop an effective future model for services.

B. Directly award a contract to a new provider

This option is not recommended as the council would not be adhering to procurement law.

C. Transfer the service in-house with direct delivery of the service

This would mean 0-19 public health nursing services would sit within the council's management structure, for example, within Children's Services and/or Public Health. This is a model that has been adopted by a number of other local authorities in the South West, for example, Devon, Cornwall and Somerset. Learning from other local authorities suggests this type of transformation requires a lot of resource and a long period of mobilisation to ensure new arrangements are safely enacted. During the engagement activities with managers in Children's Services we will look at the service model, however transferring services in-house is not the preferred option at this time. This option will remain available until the start of the proposed procurement in January 2021.

AUTHOR

Hayley Burton
Health Improvement Advanced Specialist (Children and Young People)

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Stage 1 Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)

BACKGROUND PAPERS

N/A

Appendix 1

North Somerset Council Initial Equality Impact Assessment

1. The Proposal

Service area:	Public Health
Lead Officer:	Hayley Burton, Health Improvement Advanced Specialist – Children & Young People
Links to budget reduction proposal? (Yes/No):	No
Date of assessment:	3 rd August 2020

Description of the proposal:

To commence a competitive procurement exercise for awarding the contract for 0 North Somerset -19 public health nursing services from 1st April 2022 – 31st March 2027 (five-years), with the option of a further two-year extension (ending 31st March 2029).

Summary of changes:

Local authorities are responsible for commissioning public health nursing services for children aged 0-19 years (health visiting and school nursing services). 0-19 Public Health Nursing services deliver universal and targeted services in line with the national Healthy Child Programme (HCP) to children and families from the antenatal period until 19 years with the aim of improving outcomes and reducing inequalities.

The council is required to undergo a competitive procurement process for the provision of these services from 1st April 2022 which could result in a change of provider for these services.

During the preparation phase of the procurement process (Jul-Dec 20) we will consult with a wide range of stakeholders, including service users and the wider community. This stage of the process will also consider information gained from the 0-19 Health Needs Assessment which was completed in 2019. Together, this will help inform the service specification for the procurement, with the aim of delivering service improvements and value for money for the council.

2. Customer equality impact summary

Will the proposal have a disproportionate impact on any of these groups?

Impact Level Insert X into one box per row, for impact level and type.					Impact type		
	High	Medium	Low	None	Positive	Neutral	Negative
Disabled people – children with disabilities			X		X		
People from different ethnic groups				X			

Men or women (including pregnant women or those on maternity leave) – pregnant women			X		X		
Lesbian, gay or bisexual people				X			
People on a low income				X			
People in particular age groups – children aged 0-19 years			X		X		
People in particular faith groups				X			
People who are married or in a civil partnership				X			
Transgender people				X			
Other specific impacts, for example: carers, parents, impact on health and wellbeing. Please specify: Parents & carers, impact on health & wellbeing			x		X		

3. Explanation of customer impact

The primary users of these services are children and young people aged 0-19, and their parents, carers and families. The health visiting service should see all pregnant women during the antenatal period. Early identification of additional and/or complex needs, with timely access to health visiting and school nursing services, is one of the objectives of the Health Child Programme.

Therefore, these groups of the population are most likely to be impacted by any changes to 0-19 Public Health Nursing services which result from the proposed procurement. The aim of the procurement will be to secure the delivery of services which best meet the needs of the target population, and to provide value for money for the council - therefore, the impact should be positive for the groups highlighted above.

The universal nature of the service means there will be no disproportionate impact to any other of the protected groups listed above as the services should be fair and open to all.

4. Staff equality impact summary

Are there any staffing implications for this proposal?

☐

Yes

☒

x

No

Explanation of staff impact

This is a commissioned service and therefore the staff delivering the service are not employed by North Somerset Council.

6. Review and Sign Off

Directorate Equality Group

When was this assessment reviewed by the Directorate Equality Group? << insert date here >>

Is a further detailed equality impact assessment needed? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If 'yes', when will the further assessment be completed? << insert date here >>

Service Manager: Hayley Burton, Health Improvement Advanced Specialist (Children & Young People)

Date: 14/08/2020

Please ensure this EIA is approved by Service Manager prior to circulation.

If this assessment identifies a potential medium or high impact, then a Full Equality Impact Assessment needs to be completed