

NORTH SOMERSET COUNCIL

**DECISION OF COUNCILLOR NIGEL ASHTON
LEADER OF THE COUNCIL AND
THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR PUBLIC HEALTH
with advice from the DIRECTOR, PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES**



DECISION NO: P&C64

SUBJECT: Sexual health and additional public health services commissioned from Weston Area Health Trust (2016/17)

DECISION: AGREEMENT AND APPROVAL IS SOUGHT TO:

Award Weston Area Health Trust (WAHT) with a one year contract for the provision of:

- specialist sexual health – genitourinary medicine services (sexually transmitted infection testing and treatment) and contraception services
- maternal weight management
- breastfeeding specialist clinic
- library service

1) INTRODUCTION

Under the Health and Social Care Act (2012), local authorities have a mandated responsibility to commission comprehensive, open access sexual health services. This includes providing specialist services to the local population which can meet the full range of potential sexual health needs.

WAHT is the only specialist sexual health service provider physically based in North Somerset and approximately 78% of the activity at WAHT sexual health services is provided to North Somerset residents.

2) RATIONALE

This section of the decision paper sets out the reasons for issuing the contract directly to the current provider under similar terms and conditions without retendering for these services. The service is to commence from 1st April 2016 and run until 31st March 2017.

The Council's Contract Standing Orders provides for an exception to the requirement to undertake a competitive tendering/procurement process in highly exceptional circumstances. The exceptional circumstances applicable to this exception fall under CSO 5.2.9, which is as follows:

'where there is no effective competition for the goods, services or works in question because payment is fixed under statutory authority or is of such a specialist nature that there is effectively only one supplier'

Based on the above criterion, the primary reason for not competitively tendering the contract at this stage is that WAHT is the only specialist sexual health service provider in North Somerset with the capability to deliver the full integrated service.

The following considerations also apply:

Patient care:

It is vital to ensure that the quality of patient care is maintained in line with NHS clinical guidelines. WAHT currently delivers safe, high quality services that are compliant with national guidelines. There are risks involved in commissioning non-NHS organisations to provide these services in terms of clinical governance and compliance.

Health service infrastructure:

There is a need to ensure that the close inter-relationships between clinical services at WAHT are maintained, for example laboratory services and HIV care. Any change in provision would require a detailed risk assessment around clinical governance and the proposed clinical setting.

Developing the market for specialist Sexual Health Services:

Since April 2015, Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire Councils have collaborated to plan the process for procurement of sexual health services across the three areas. This is being overseen by the Directors of Public Health.

3) FUTURE COMMISSIONING

A report was presented to the Executive in October 2014 on sexual health commissioning arrangements. The report set an ambition for an update on the procurement of sexual health services across Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire (BNSSG) to be brought back to the Executive during 2015 with a new service to be established by March 2016.

However, it has taken longer than anticipated to secure agreement across the BNSSG local authorities and with the NHS on the scope of the procurement and confirm the available resources. This is particularly in light of the ongoing reductions to the local authority Public Health grant. Bristol City Council is the lead commissioner with North Somerset Council and South Gloucestershire Council as associate commissioners. The aim is now to complete a tender process and have new service arrangements in place from April 2017. Extending existing contract arrangements for specialist sexual health during 2016/17 will allow for this joint procurement process to be completed.

The aim of the future sexual health procurement is to improve the sexual health system by achieving improved patient outcomes and greater efficiencies through the redesign of services. Whilst WAHT is the only specialist sexual health service provider in North Somerset with the current capability to deliver the full integrated service, the proposed future procurement will be based on a review of service pathways which may allow a different service model to emerge. Other providers may be in a position to tender for these services either as a single provider or as part of a consortium bid.

For non-sexual health elements of the WAHT contract, these services were initially commissioned as pilots in and analysis showed that an adult weight management service which began in April 2014 should (and has) been decommissioned. However, outcomes from the maternity weight management, breastfeeding clinic and library services are positive and a continuation of these services is recommended. A revised commissioning process for these services will be agreed during 2016/17 to separate them from the sexual health procurement process.

4) FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

The proposed extension of contract with WAHT has four separate funding elements:

Specialist sexual health services (GUM and contraception)	£957,000
Maternal weight management	£18,750
Library service	£4,120
Breastfeeding specialist clinic	£5,560
Total	£985,430

These costs will be funded in full from the ring fenced public health budget. Contract savings for the services provided by WAHT have already been achieved in order to meet the reduction to the local authority public health grant and deliver the public health contribution to the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan.

	Contract value: 2014/15	Contract value: 2015/16	Contract value: 2016/17
Specialist sexual health services	£1,007,000	£1,007,000	£957,000
Maternal weight management	£18,750	£18,750	£18,750
Library service	£6,120	£6,120	£4,120
Breastfeeding specialist clinic	£7,000	£5,560	£5,560

The need for future savings will be taken into account during the proposed procurement of sexual health services across BNSSG and new commissioning arrangements for other public health services provided by WAHT.

Signed:
Councillor Nigel Ashton
Leader of the Council and Executive Member for Public Health

Dated:

Reviewed:

Dated:

Confirmation of advice given:

Signed:

Sheila Smith
Director, People and Communities

Dated: