

NORTH SOMERSET COUNCIL

DECISION: EXCEPTION TO STANDING ORDERS TO MAKE A SHORT-TERM DIRECT AWARD OF CONTRACT FOR THE PROVISION OF CARER SUPPORT SERVICES.

**DECISION OF: DIRECTOR OF PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES
WITH ADVICE FROM: HEAD OF COMMISSIONING
DIRECTORATE: PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES**



DECISION NO: P&C 72 (18/19 scheme)

SUBJECT: Director's decision to make an exception to standing orders for a short-term direct award of contract for the provision of carer support services.

KEY DECISION: YES

BACKGROUND:

The contract for delivery of Carer Support Services is currently provided by NSAH (Alliance Homes) Ltd, registered with the Industrial and Provident Society number IP29804R. The contract was for an initial four year period from the 1st May 2014 – 30th April 2018 with an option to extend for a further year. Director's approval was given for the contract to be extended - see decision, P&C49, 2017/18. The contract therefore ends on the 30th April 2019.

The Carers Support Service provides carers with practical and emotional support for as long as they are willing and able to continue with their caring role.

The service identifies carers early in their pathway so as to implement preventative measures to reduce the risk of crisis. The service ensures that carers access appropriate support services and the provider is proactive in early identification. When a crisis does occur, the provider supports carers to stabilise the situation and reduce the risk of any further breakdown.

There are several influences on the commissioning of carers support services in North Somerset and the following issues need to be assessed and understood before recommissioning can be completed;

- The BNSSG CCG commission additional carers services, beyond those provided by the local authorities, across the BNSSG area. The services vary between the three local authorities and the BNSSG CCG are reviewing their funding to provide these additional services through local authority contracts.
- The CCG currently contributes £76,000 per annum toward the carers support contract and will fund a pro-rata contribution for the short-term award.

- The Council's carers lead is piloting a new assessment process with the current provider, the findings from this will inform the recommissioning options for this service.
- As part of the review of carers support services North Somerset Council will complete a consultation exercise and an equalities impact assessment.

DECISION:

To approve an exception to Standing Orders to award of a short-term contract with NSAH (Alliance Homes) for Carer Support Services for the period 1st May 2019 to the 30th April 2020.

REASONS:

Under the Council's Standing Orders, 6.3 Exceptions, where a contract is below EU procurement thresholds the relevant decision maker may approve exceptions to standing orders where it is considered there are acceptable reasons to do so. The contract is within the Light Touch procurement regime thresholds and under standing orders a decision of this value by be made by the Director.

The direct award of a short-term contract with the current provider until the 31st March 2020 will enable the Council to take part in full commissioning discussions with the BNSSG CCG and South Gloucestershire and Bristol Councils. It will also allow additional time to consult with the community and complete an equalities impact assessment. Seeking this alternative route to a tender process ensures that the most appropriate, efficient and cost-effective services are identified, and these can then be commissioned in a new contract from the 1st April 2020. Under the Council's Standing Order 6.3.1. a valid reason for exception is where a quantifiable and significant cost and efficiency saving can be achieved through seeking an alternative route.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED:

The option of tendering for a new contract to deliver the same services as commissioned now, with a contract beginning 1st May 2019, was considered. This option was not considered the best route forward due to the mismatch in timetables with the BNSSG CCG. This route would not have allowed us to consider all the necessary evidence and strategic options available. Procuring a contract ahead of other programmed reviews may have resulted in an inappropriate service and unnecessarily costs.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

The annual value of the Carers Support Contract is £315,865. This includes a contribution of £76,000 per annum from the CCG.

The total contract value for the 11-month short term award is £289,543 including a contribution from the Clinical Commissioning Group of £69,667.

NSC cost for 11 months is £219,876

The contract costs to the Council are contained within the current budget.

LEGAL POWERS AND IMPLICATIONS

The Council has a statutory duty to provide support service to carers .

CONSULTATION

The current provider NSAH (Alliance Homes) ltd have confirmed their interest in a short-term award based on the existing contract for Carer Support Services.

RISK MANAGEMENT

A direct award of contract would ensure continuation of Carer Support Services while an appropriate commissioning process is completed.

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

An equalities impact assessment will be completed prior to retendering of the contract for Career Support Services.

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

None

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Directors decision to approve the one year extension to the Carers Support Contract - P&C 49, 2017/18

Directors Exception to Contract Standing Orders Decision P&C 71 (18/19 scheme)

SIGNATORIES:

DECISION MAKER: Director of People and Communities

Signed: Sheila Dhill.....

Title: DIRECTOR, PEOPLE + COMMUNITIES.....

Date: 9 APRIL 2019.....

WITH ADVICE FROM:

Head of Commissioning

Signed: Gereath.....

Title: HEAD of COMMISSIONING.....

Date: 9 APRIL 2019.....

Mark Roddan, Head of Strategic Procurement

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Title: HEAD OF PROCUREMENT

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