

North Somerset Council Decision

Decision Of: Director of Adult Social Services

With Advice From: Section 151 Officer Head of Commissioning and Head of Strategic Procurement

Directorate: Adult Social Services



Decision No: ASC14 (2023/24 Scheme)

Subject: Direct Award of an Emergency Response and Wellness Contract to Access Your Care Limited

Key Decision: Yes

Reason:

This decision is a key decision as the costs associated with the decision are more than £500,000. It is not significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards in the area of the Local Authority.

Background:

Reablement

On 20 December 2021 a Director Decision ASC034 was agreed to extend the existing Wellness Service contract and North Somerset Community Care Rapid Response contract to the 4 September 2023.

On 4 February 2022 a Director Decision ASC057 agreed the model for an improved and integrated Wellness and North Somerset Community Care Response Service.

On 8 February 2023 the Executive agreed the proposal presented to spend a Hospital Discharge Grant awarded to the council by the Department of Health and Social Care as part of finding solutions to alleviating winter pressures on the hospitals. A further expansion of the Emergency Response and Wellness Service was one of the proposals presented.

Decision:

To direct award an Emergency Response and Wellness Service contract until 4 September 2024 to Access Your Care, that enables the council to continue to work with a single partner to develop an effective and best value Service, as an exception to Contract Standing Orders.

Reasons:

As agreed in the original decision, the Wellness Service and North Somerset Community Care Response Service have been merged.

The Wellness Service is now available seven days a week from 9am to 10pm.

On 23 November 2022, the Service recommenced supporting non-injured fallers in the community. A pilot with Sirona Health and Care also commenced the same day to evidence the benefits of joint working with fallers. Data three months into the pilot is showing good results:

- 200 referrals diverted from the ambulance service;
- 151 referrals lifted;
- 76 Whzan blue box (telehealth monitoring) used;
- 72 post falls obs checks carried out.

The Response service is rapidly becoming seen as a key service in the development of the Integrated Care Partnerships Aging Well programme, looking at reactionary care to the residents of North Somerset. The service impacts across a number of key areas and there is a desire amongst Integrated Care Board colleagues for further development of the service to support;

- An expansion of the falls pathway to receive referrals from other sources than Carelink, to continue to relieve strain on the ambulance service;
- Short term reactionary care and support supporting the new ACE pathways to prevent hospital admission and emergency placements and support people home from the acutes via NHS at Home;
- Reactive telehealth monitoring, welfare calls and observations supporting both NSC duty and Sirona.

These developments require a test and learn approach and the development of new referral pathways supporting a wide range of stakeholders and therefore we are not in a position to be able to tender for a definitive service.

Access Your Care has demonstrated that they are the most suitable provider to work with the council on this contract and the developments detailed, and the only provider with the capacity and will to implement changes at the pace needed.

Options Considered:

The only other option at this stage is to tender for the Emergency Response and Wellness Service contract. The council, as part of the wider health and social care system, is subject to short-term funding from different sources that are time limited and aimed specifically at the development of services like the Emergency Response and Wellness Service to support system flow and winter pressures. The limited time period of this funding is not conducive with the time needed to tender.

Regulation 32 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 allows for public contracts to be awarded without a prior publication using reg 32(2)(c): "The negotiated procedure without

prior publication may be used for public works contracts, public supply contracts and public service contracts in any of the following cases:... where, for reasons of extreme urgency brought about by events unforeseeable by the contracting authority, the time limits for the open or restricted procedures or competitive procedures with negotiation cannot be complied with.

Financial Implications:

Contract element	Funding	2023/24 cost	Funding	2023/24 cost	Total
Wellness Service and Response Service	ICB	£180,000	Adult Social Care/BCF (including discharge grant)	£1,219,522.75	£1,399,522.75

Legal Powers and Implications:

Given that the council is responding to national changes in pathways to support hospital discharge, and these services are urgently needed to be expanded to prevent the multiple challenges facing health and social care, to strengthen capacity and provide better outcomes for residents. Additional capacity for this service will be provided by NHS funds to strengthen these changes. Therefore, these changes will be implemented as a direct award to Access Your Care. This decision is covered by the following exceptions to Contract Standing Orders:

6.3.2 reasons of extreme urgency mean that normal time limits cannot be met, including as a result of unforeseen emergency or disruption to Council services. This may include for example, storm damage to public buildings. Not having sufficient time to tender may not in itself constitute urgency.

The need for the council to respond to the pressures within the health and social care system is urgent. We feel it is not in the council’s best interest to tender for an Emergency Response and Wellness Service quickly and be in a position where the level of service either puts the council in a detrimental financial position or does not offer enough Service to support the system.

Climate Change and Environmental Implications:

We will work with Access Your Care ensure that the service is planned in the most geographically efficient way possible, although travel across the whole of North Somerset will be required.

A Social Value schedule will form part of the contract the reflects the councils Social Value policy.

<https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/business/tenders-procurement/procurement-strategy/our-social-value-policy>

Consultation:

This decision is a key element of BNSSG ICB system assurances and will therefore be supported financially. Access Your Care will work closely with a wide range of stakeholders and build on existing relationships.

Risk Management:

No risks identified on the risk register scored High due to mitigating factors.

Equality Implications:

Have you undertaken an Equality Impact Assessment? Yes – Summary. Positive impact only identified.

Corporate Implications:

None

Appendices:

None

Background Papers:

ASC034



ASC034 - Reablement
Contract Direct Award

ASC057



ASC057 - Single
Reablement Pathway 1

Signatories:

Decision Maker(s):

Signed: 

Title: Director of Adult Social Services

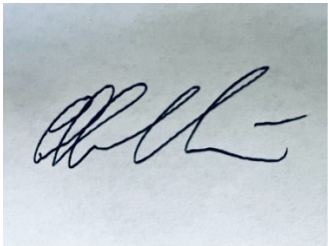
Date: 13 July 2023

With Advice From:

Signed: 

Title: Section 151 Officer

Date: 13 July 2023



Signed:

Title: Head of Strategic Procurement

Date: 13 July 2023

Footnote: Details of changes made and agreed by the decision taker since publication of the proposed (pre-signed) decision notice, if applicable: