

CAMBRIDGESHIRE HANDYPERSON SERVICE: PROCUREMENT

To: **Cabinet**

Date: **15th April 2014**

From: **Executive Director: Children, Families and Adults**

Electoral division(s): **All**

Forward Plan ref: **N/A** *Key decision:* **No**

Purpose: **To seek Cabinet approval for the Council to lead the procurement of handy person services across Cambridgeshire funded by the District /City Councils, the Clinical Commissioning Group and Cambridgeshire County Council.**

Recommendation: **To approve Cambridgeshire County Council as the lead authority for the procurement of handy person services to be delivered across Cambridgeshire, subject to the necessary approvals from each partner organisation:**

- **Cambridge City Council**
- **Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Clinical Commissioning Group**
- **East Cambridgeshire District Council**
- **Fenland District Council**
- **Huntingdonshire District Council**
- **South Cambridgeshire District Council.**

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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The availability and condition of housing are acknowledged to be amongst the most important wider determinants of health, as reflected by the adoption of the priority to create a “sustainable environment in which communities can flourish” by the Cambridgeshire Health and Wellbeing Board.
- 1.2 The provision of District/City Council led, multi-agency ‘handyman’ type services has made a key contribution across Cambridgeshire to maintaining and improving the condition of both housing and health, particularly by reducing falls. Such schemes have been established across the county for many years.
- 1.3 These services deliver low level interventions such as repairs and maintenance services, hospital discharge service, checks around the home (such as energy, fire and security checks), first-contact and referral services and other housing maintenance-related services to older individuals at a very low cost. The service is principally provided to owner occupiers or private sector tenants (who make up approximately 85% of the county’s householders). Attempting to do small jobs like these by the older person themselves poses a real risk of precipitating a fall.
- 1.4 The schemes are trusted by older people who may not trust the “market” provision. In addition many of the smaller jobs undertaken are not always provided by the market. The schemes can also identify work that needs to be done to keep the older person safe and the older person can have confidence that they are not been exploited financially.
- 1.5 Following a report to the Health and Wellbeing Board in October 2012, the Board recommended: “That the Board commissions the Local Health Partnership Network and District Councils Health and Wellbeing Lead Members Forum to establish a “task and finish” group comprising officers from all the District/City Councils, Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and County Council to explore possible future funding and procurement options and delivery models to enable this highly successful service to continue”.

2. PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The proposal for the County Council to lead on the procurement of handyperson services has come from the Task and Finish Group which includes representation from the District/City Councils, CCG and County Council. There are currently different services and delivery arrangements across the county and through the work the task and finish group has carried out and the paper presented to the Health and Wellbeing Board, there was an agreed desire to have a county wide approach to delivering this service in order to ensure a consistent model across the county. The task and finish group have agreed that there should be some local variations as the Districts/City may wish to fund additional services under the handyperson service.

2.2 Two options for securing the handyperson service were considered, which are set out below.

2.2.1 Option 1: The most common model being delivered in other areas of the country is a joint tendering approach where one party leads on commissioning a jointly agreed specification on behalf of a partnership with a separate funding agreement agreed by all parties.

Advantages:

- Achieves best value for money through a competitive process
- Any organisation can bid to provide the scheme including Home Improvement Agencies (HIAs) and voluntary sector
- One consistent service across the county with one branding
- Efficiencies made through economies of scale for service provider

Disadvantages

- Cost of tendering process is high for a relatively small budget service
- May not be able to integrate with other statutory services so easily
- Will need a funding agreement and lead commissioner.

2.2.2 Option 2: The alternative is to develop an integrated service without the need for tendering which could include integration initially with Home Improvement Agencies.

Advantages

- No need to tender and go through procurement process
- There is an existing joint Funding Agreement between the some of the partners for the Home Improvement Agency covering the City, Huntingdonshire and South Cambridgeshire
- Home Improvement Agencies already deal with the same client groups and carry out adaptations
- Opportunity to integrate with other statutory services in future

Disadvantages

- No incentive on provider to be competitive or innovative
- Third sector would be excluded from providing the service
- Lacks transparency and visibility
- Risk of challenge from existing providers.

2.3 The task and finish group agreed that as there is already a local market for handyperson services with a number of organisations currently providing the service within Cambridgeshire, it would be appropriate to undertake a procurement exercise to secure the service – Option 1 above was therefore supported.

2.4 The vision is that there will be a core countywide service specification that focuses on the low level work to support safety and security in the home. The work can include having flooring secured, key safe installation, securing trailing wires and provision of half steps. The specification will also include undertaking an assessment to further enhance and enable independence by signposting to other agencies

as part of preventative measures to better enable people to remain in their own home.

- 2.5 It is envisaged that some Districts and potentially local commissioning groups will want to offer additional services such as gardening and decoration services under the service. This would facilitate a greater sense of wellbeing to the vulnerable person.
- 2.6 While the task and finish group have been working together to progress this work, the guidance on the Better Care Fund (BCF) has been issued. The work to develop plans for the BCF has invited proposals from across the health and social care system. These proposals include investment in the handyperson service. Depending on the outcome of discussions about the proposals for the BCF, the task and finish group would incorporate these proposals into the procurement activity outlined in this report.

3. MAIN ISSUES

- 3.1 Within Cambridgeshire there have been a number of handyperson type services funded from a variety of sources but primarily by District Councils and the County Council through the former Supporting People programme, with some funding from CCG (formerly Primary Care Trust). The peak of the funding was during 2010-2012 when the predecessor of the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) made a time limited specific grant of £185K to start-up new handyperson services or expand current services. This funding was invested locally in expanding the services for a time-limited period of two years while grant was available. Some of the work has carried on through the District/City Councils and there is a common desire to work together to secure funding from all parties and better secure handyperson services across the whole county.
- 3.2 There is a need to define the type of service that would provide the most benefit to Cambridgeshire residents. Having researched services provided across the country, there are a number of different types of service available to meet a variety of outcomes. Some of these are provided separately in Cambridgeshire but would benefit from being brought together.
- 3.3 In order to co-ordinate the procurement functions for this jointly funded service (described as Option 1 in 2.2.1 above) it was agreed that a lead for procurement was required. Given that the County Council and CCG are the two authorities with a countywide involvement they are best placed for this task. As there is still a major transition taking place within the CCG, this would mean that currently the County Council is in the best position to lead. The County Council will run the procurement exercise through its standard procurement processes with full involvement of the task and finish group in developing the service specification, evaluating the bids and selecting the preferred provider(s).
- 3.4 The task and finish group have modelled the new service on a budget of £250K with the District/City Councils, the Council and the CCG contributing a third each. The Adult Social Care Directorate has

planned for the £83.3K investment to be available from April 2015. The contribution from the CCG will need to be negotiated with the successful provider(s) in the current procurement process for older people and community services that the CCG is running. The specification for this service is outcome based and includes the prevention of unnecessary hospital admissions to which the handyperson services can contribute. The task and finish group have taken into account the timeline of the CCG procurement process to inform the timeline for the procurement for the handyperson services. At this stage there is uncertainty about the outcome of the negotiation required with the successful provider(s) of the older people and community services. However, the task and finish group are committed to progress the work in preparation for the procurement of the handyperson services. If funding is not secured through the negotiations with the successful provider(s) of the older people and community services, the County Council and Districts/City will need to decide whether they proceed with the procurement with reduced funding.

- 3.5 As the work progresses, colleagues in Public Health will be engaged to discuss the potential of additional funding to expand the service beyond that currently planned by the task and finish group and to consider ways to evaluate the effectiveness of the service in preventing the need for more expensive interventions.

4. ALIGNMENT WITH PRIORITIES AND WAYS OF WORKING

4.1 Developing the local economy for the benefit of all

The contract for handyperson services would provide employment for tradesmen who are skilled at a range of practical household maintenance tasks.

4.2 Helping people live healthy and independent lives

The handyperson services have been effective in supporting people to maintain healthy and independent lives by undertaking a range of practical tasks to enable older people to remain safely in their own home. Procuring services across the county with partners provides the opportunity to build on the current provision in a cohesive way to ensure the delivery of the service countywide.

4.3 Supporting and protecting vulnerable people

The handyperson service is focused on older people supporting them to remain safely in their own homes. The assessment element of the service means that referrals can be made to other organisations that can provide other preventative interventions to keep people safe and secure in their own home.

4.4 Ways of working

4.4.1 • Developing our leadership role

Taking the lead on the procurement process, working with District/City and CCG colleagues, demonstrates a willingness on the part of the County Council to offer leadership in delivering services in a collaborative way with partners.

- 4.4.2 • Working at the local level
The importance of being able to vary the service specification to meet particular local requirements has been discussed with partners and together we have agreed that there will be a core specification for the service that can be added to as required to meet local circumstances.
- 4.4.3 • Investing in growth
There is no specific link to this way of working.

5. SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Resource and Performance Implications

There is a requirement for the partnership to agree and commit to the procurement and subsequent funding of the service in order to maintain its viability as a whole. This will be achieved by establishing a funding agreement between all parties. An example of this is the agreement for the Home Improvement Agencies between Cambridge City Council, South Cambridgeshire District Council and Huntingdonshire District Council.

5.2 Statutory, Risk and Legal Implications

The handyperson service will play an important part in the prevention agenda for older people that will fit with the requirements of the draft Care and Support Bill.

To mitigate the risk to the County Council in leading the procurement process and letting the contract for the handyperson services, an agreement will be put in place between the County Council and the other funding organisations that will tie the funders to terms and conditions including notice periods that fit with the contract. This approach has been used successfully by three of the District/City Councils for the Home Improvement Agency that manages the Disabled Facilities Grant on their behalf.

5.3 Equality and Diversity Implications

There are no significant equality and diversity implications.

5.4 Engagement and Consultation Implications

The task and finish group has an agreed timescale for any consultation and service user engagement prior to the procurement phase and if required this would be carried out on both a county and district basis.

Source Documents	Location
None	