

Procuring additional Adult Social Care reassessment capacity

To: Adults and Health Committee

Meeting Date: 25 January 2024

From: Executive Director for Adults, Health and Commissioning

Electoral division(s): All

Key decision: Yes

Forward Plan ref: 2024/033

Executive Summary: People with eligible care and support needs will have their reassessments completed, ensuring their care and support needs are being met; and the Council will operate with a reduced work backlog.

Recommendation: In the event we cannot hire interim staff as per paragraph 2.4, Adults and Health Committee is recommended to:

- a) Delegate responsibility for awarding any contracts for the provision of Adult Social Care reassessment work commencing March 2024 to the Executive Director of Adults, Health and Commissioning
- b) Delegate responsibility for executing any contracts for the provision of Adult Social Care reassessment work starting middle of March 2024 to the Executive Director of Adults, Health and Commissioning.
- c) This work has an estimated contract value of £1,180,000 over the next 12 months.


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1. Creating a greener, fairer and more caring Cambridgeshire

- 1.1 This report relates to Ambition 4 from the Councils  [Strategic Framework 2023-28](#). Ambition 4 states “People enjoy healthy, safe, and independent lives through timely support that is most suited to their needs”.

2. Background

- 2.1 In preparations for Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspection work of the Council's Adult Social Care services, the Council is implementing recommendations received from Local Government Association (LGA) Peer Review of Adult Social Care and Commissioning in 2022.
- 2.2 The Committee received a progress update on 5th October 2023.
- 2.3 Amongst the key recommendations and proposed actions included:
- Recommendation 4 - The Council should minimise backlogs of assessments including Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards and reviews. Where external agencies are used to complete reviews, the Council should ensure that agency staff are clear about their authority and the process to make changes to care and support.
- 2.4 We have been working at pace to reduce the backlogs of assessments however, more work is required. Given there remains an acute shortage of qualified and experienced social workers (approx. 20% - 26% vacancy rate), meeting our requirements for assessment work, means hiring support from outside companies.
- 2.5 This report explains the additional capacity required and how we might achieve this and how it might be funded.

3. Main Issues

3.1 Existing assessment work

A contract is in place with Eden Brown Limited (Trading as Eden Brown Synergy) via ESPO Strategic HR Framework 3S_18. The value of the work under this contract is £391k. The contract will expire during the first half of 2024. The actual date will be dependent upon time taken to resolving each case. For example, some cases may present new and emerging care and support needs which require more time to detail and involve people's families and wider network and partners such as the ICB.

When the current work commenced, there was no plan to procure further assessment work nor was there any financial resource to draw down.

The work delivered has been to a high standard and meeting Cambridgeshire County Council's Code of Conduct for Social Workers and all relevant Professional Social Work Practice Standards as per Social Work England.

Whilst work continues to recruit permanent staff, to undertake this work, there remains a need to fulfil this duty and ensure capacity exists during this period.

3.2 Further assessment work

The requirements for further work are:

- assessing new people where referrals for social care have been made by the person or others, that includes carer assessments, mental capacity assessments, continuing health care checklists, that leads to commissioning the appropriate care and support services or advice.
- reassessing people as an outcome from their annual review or unplanned/pre-annual review where there is a significant change in their current situation which requires some or all aspects of the social care and support arrangements to be increased; includes better/different risk management activity and support.
- Carer support where identified, to enhance the cared for person's outcomes and support the carer which can result in a carers assessment or a review of any existing arrangements.
- annual reviews: existing care and support plans where no changes are identified/needed, or changes are needed, and all is working to plan/not working to plan, the person's care and support plan is updated in Mosaic to reflect the outcomes, which can include reducing/increasing previous care arrangements put in place to manage risks/improve outcomes. Where there is stability and the enhanced care is no longer required or necessary, care is reduced and agreed with all parties involved.

There are over 2,000 care assessments and reviews to be completed. This is made up of 700 back log assessments and 1,300 scheduled reviews where there is a capacity shortfall. This will help to be up to date with learning disabilities assessment work in relation to the Learning Disability Partnership Section 75 pooled budget financial risk share arrangements reported to Committee in October 2023 (forward plan reference 2023/097).

3.3 HR, procurement, finance, and contracts arrangements

Having reviewed current capacity, we do not have sufficient resources to complete the work through Acting Up / Secondments / Reallocation of work. Consequently, we shall be applying the Agency Worker and Interims Policy to complete the hiring of resources. We shall approach our partner OPUS.

In the event our usual approach to hiring resources, via OPUS, is unable to meet the requirements we shall explore using existing framework agreements in compliance with the Councils Contract Procedure Rules. Given the value and risk level involved we shall run a further competition.

The staff will be required to demonstrate how they deliver services in an outcome-based and person-centred care way. As the work is carried out by professional social workers and specialist staff, it is expected salaries will exceed the real living wage.

3.4 The overall requirement for this service is up to £1,180k which it is proposed to be funded from £400k base budget, £280k Transformation Funding reserves, and up to £500k up to

Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund grant. This proposed funded aligns with the current proposals within the paper considered by Strategy, Resources and Performance Committee on 19 December 2023, which is also scrutinised elsewhere on the same agenda as this paper. Work is estimated at £1,100 per assessment. This is a blended amount taking account of the work time and the range of skills involved. No inflationary price changes are applicable.

- 3.5 The process to hire interim staff would start from the beginning of February 2024. Consequently, a project go-live date is between middle of March 2024 and middle of April 2024.

4. Alternative Options Considered

- 4.1 Noting the work achieved and that the specification remains the same, we have considered the following three options to make efficient the use of CCC resources.

1. Do-nothing

The current work would be completed however a backlog will remain in place. Any inspection carried out by the CQC would show strong progress from the work done before an indefinite pause. This might be seen negatively by the CQC.

Further, as the backlog remains in place, it's reasonable to assume that people's needs may not be met with the right services. Consequently, this has the effect of inefficient use of long-term resources.

On balance, this option would not provide best value for money.

2. Start hiring resource to do work now

Work planning has taken place, and the support network remains in place from partners such as the ICB. This means we can evenly schedule our work and expand on the relationships that have formed. Further it means we can build on the work done and continue to reduce the backlog of assessments.

Any inspection carried out by the CQC would show strong progress from the work done before and a steady plan to continue to reduce the backlog of assessments.

On balance, this option would provide best value for money.

3. Start hiring resource to do work later

The current work would be completed however a backlog will remain in place. Any inspection carried out by the CQC would show strong progress from the work done before a pause. This might be seen negatively by the CQC.

Work planning has taken place, and the support network remains in place from partners such as the ICB. Any delay is likely to mean the plan needs to be re-written and the partner network needs to be re-built. Consequently, this has the effect of inefficient use of long-term resources.

On balance, this option would not provide best value for money.

Option 2 is recommended. It offers the efficiency of building on work done whilst signalling to the CQC our commitment to continue to reduce assessment backlogs.

5. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

- 5.1 By completing the reassessment work now for people, the Council can improve its ability to meet care and support needs in a timely manner. It offers the efficiency of building on work done whilst signalling to the CQC our commitment to continue to reduce assessment backlogs.

6. Significant Implications

6.1 Finance Implications

- There is a significant implication within this category.
The overall requirement for this service is up to £1,180k which it is proposed to be funded from £400k base budget, £280k Transformation Funding reserves, and up to £500k up to Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund grant.

6.2 Legal Implications

- There are no significant implications within this category.

6.3 Risk Implications

- There are no significant implications within this category.

6.4 Equality and Diversity Implications

- There are no significant implications within this category. EqIA reference CCC570444241
- a) A completed Equality, Impact Assessment (EqIA) form ([Equality Impact Assessment Hub](#)) must be attached as an appendix to this report, if appropriate.

6.5 Climate Change and Environment Implications (Key decisions only)

- 6.5.1 Implication 1: Energy efficient, low carbon buildings.
neutral
Explanation: No change

- 6.5.2 Implication 2: Low carbon transport.
neutral
Explanation: No change

- 6.5.3 Implication 3: Green spaces, peatland, afforestation, habitats and land management.
neutral
Explanation: No change

6.5.4 Implication 4: Waste Management and Tackling Plastic Pollution.

neutral

Explanation: No change

6.5.5 Implication 5: Water use, availability and management:

neutral

Explanation: No change

6.5.6 Implication 6: Air Pollution.

neutral

Explanation: No change

6.5.7 Implication 7: Resilience of our services and infrastructure and supporting vulnerable people to cope with climate change.

neutral:

Explanation: No change

7. Source Documents

7.1 None

APPENDIX 1 – GUIDANCE AND CHECKLIST FOR IMPLICATIONS IN SECTION 4

Report authors should decide whether in each category there are no, some or significant implications, considering each of the prompt questions. A commentary need only be included within the report where there are significant implications. Report authors will need to clear each implication category with the relevant officer. They may wish to do this before the drafting of a report particularly if the issue is contentious.

A working definition of “significant” is where the broader implications of a proposal are so evident /substantial that they need to be taken into consideration when Members are making a decision on the proposal.

All headings (in bold below) should be included. However, if the implications have been referenced earlier in the report, the detail does not need to be repeated – just a reference made to the relevant text.

Finance/Resource Implications	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What are the capital and revenue costs?• What is the availability of current and future budget provision?• Is the organisation delivering value for money?• Is the best placed organisation delivering this service?• What are the implications for our property assets?• What are the implications for IT and data ownership?• What are the impacts on human resources – employees’ Terms & Conditions, work location, staffing levels, industrial relations, Human Resources (HR) policies and if so, has advice on the report been sought?• Have we considered and are we in line with good practice?• Is our performance as an authority or partnership impacted?• Have we benchmarked cost and performance against neighbours?• Include here consideration of any resource or financial implications, what they are, whether there is provision in existing budgets, whether the decision might give rise to expenditure at a later date, and whether there is the potential for income generation or savings. You should set out implications for both revenue and capital budgets. Any implications must be agreed with the Executive Director for Finance and Resources (or their nominee) so that issues relating to finance, staffing, property assets, procurement and ICT matters can be comprehensively reflected in the report as appropriate. If there are no resource or financial implications this should also be stated, i.e: ‘There are no resources or financial implications arising from the proposals.’
Legal Implications	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Please consult with the Pathfinder Legal Services or externally procured advice on completing this section.• You must specify any legal/governance implications of any recommended or possible decision, you should try and complete these as much as you can prior to review by Pathfinder Legal Services. If there are no legal implications this must also be stated, i.e: ‘There are no legal implications arising from the proposals.’ It will be rare that there will be no implications.

Risk Implications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For some reports, a relevant risk will already exist in the corporate risk register and it is appropriate to refer to it by including the risk reference and residual and inherent risk scores. Also, where a significant change is likely as a result of a recommendation, then it may be appropriate to create a new risk record in the risk register. However, for many reports Members need to be able to consider what specific risks to the Council may arise as a result of making, or indeed not making, the recommended decision. This may not be the same as identifying the more general corporate or service risks that would be recorded in the risk register, and simply cross referencing to a 'best fit' existing risk will not aid the decision-making process. Consider the recommendations being made in the report and ensure potential risks and the specific controls or actions that are being taken to mitigate the risks surrounding the decisions are identified. This helps Members to focus on the likelihood and the impact of their decision making. There will be more routine reports that contain recommendations that do not have significant risks - positive or adverse - associated with them. Where this is the case, the following sentence can be inserted: 'There are no significant risks arising from the proposed recommendations in this report.' For capital project risk implications the risk should be costed.
Equality and Diversity Implications	<p>Provide a summary of the main impacts identified and any mitigating actions or opportunities to remove barriers, reduce negative impacts and ensure that our services, employment, and decision-making are inclusive.</p> <p><u>A completed EqIA form (downloaded from the EqIA e-form) must be attached as an appendix to this report.</u></p> <p>The completion of this paragraph demonstrates due regard to the Council's equalities duties under:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Public Sector Equality Duty within the Equality Act 2010 Other relevant legislation such as The Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018, The Council's commitment to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty for Socio-economic Inequalities. <p>Depending on the situation, it may also demonstrate due regard to the Council's duties under the Equality Act 2010 as it relates to our work as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An employer A service provider An education authority and/or A property owner <p>As a public sector organisation we must remove unlawful discrimination, advance equal opportunities, and promote good relations between people.</p> <p>The Council has decided to use the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) process to help us demonstrate that we have met the above requirements.</p> <p>For more information on our duties and responsibilities, and guidance how to use the EqIA e-form etc, please see the CCC Equality Impact Assessment Hub</p>

Climate Change and Environment Implications	<p>Applicable to key decisions only.</p> <p>How does the recommendation support (or impede) delivery of the Council's seven carbon reduction, climate adaptation and nature targets? Targets available in the Climate Change & Environment Strategy - consideration of the below will support your answer:.</p> <p>Carbon & Green & House Gas emissions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the recommendation result in an increase in carbon dioxide or other greenhouse gas emissions? Quantify if possible. <p>Energy efficient, low carbon buildings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the proposal decrease energy use for the council and/or communities? • Will the proposal lead to a switch to low-carbon energy supply, including renewables? <p>Low Carbon Transport:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the proposal decrease use/reliance on the private car? • Will the proposal encourage use of cleaner modes of transport? Eg. EV, cycling, walking. • Will the proposal increase use of public transport? <p>Green spaces, peatland, afforestation, habitats, and land management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the proposal encourage, incorporate, or implement tree planting? • Will the proposal prevent or minimise tree removal? • Will the proposal create, enhance, or reduce damage to green space or natural habitats? • Will the proposal improve the accessibility of green space or nature? • Will the proposal lead to the improvement of peatland condition or extent? E.g. sustainable agriculture, restoration <p>Waste Management and Tackling Plastic Pollution:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the proposal reduce waste generated by the council and/or residents, increase recycling, or encourage use of sustainable materials? • Will the proposal reduce rubbish and waste, especially plastics, or reduce emissions from landfill? <p>Water use, availability, and management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the proposal lead to reduced risk of flooding? • Will the proposal promote and/or implement nature-based solutions to climate change (e.g balancing ponds, Sustainable Drainage solutions, tree planting etc) to manage the effects of climate change? E.g. Flood risk or heatwaves. • Will the proposal help minimise use and wastage of water at the council and/or for communities, or help secure water supplies for the future? <p>Air Pollution:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the proposal lead to a reduction in air pollution or an improvement in air quality? <p>Resilience of our services and infrastructure, and supporting vulnerable people to cope with climate change:</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the proposal lead to our services having greater ability to cope with the effects of climate change? E.g. flooding or heatwaves • Will vulnerable people better cope with climate change? <p>See the Climate Change and Environment strategy here for further information on the Council's climate priorities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact the Climate Change Officer if for advice on completing this section in the report: climate@cambridgeshire.gov.uk.
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GUIDANCE FOR SECTION 2

Report authors when writing reports should incorporate the following in the main part of the report, if appropriate. They should then seek sign off from the relevant officer, only if appropriate. Officers are encouraged to contact the relevant officer early if they report relates to any of these activities.

Procurement activity	Procurement Guide to Writing Committee Papers ;
Public Health activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the proposal have an impact on the health of Cambridgeshire residents? • Will the proposal support improving the health of the worst off fastest? • Will the proposal impact on a key health and wellbeing need identified in the Cambridgeshire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) <p>The suite of Cambridgeshire JSNA documents is available on the Council website at the following link: http://www.cambridgeshireinsight.org.uk/jsna</p> <p>Please consult with the Public Health Team for advice on completing this section. Contact number: 01223 699689.</p>
Resource	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please see Finance/Resource section on page 8.
Local engagement, communications and the involvement of Local Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has there been community engagement / public consultation and if so, what were the results? • Has discussion on the proposals taken place across directorates and with other relevant councils / agencies? • What are the implications for engagement with voluntary/community sector? • Have affected employees been consulted? • Have you fully informed Local Members about matters affecting their divisions during the formative stages of policy development and discussion at informal meetings, as required by Part 5.3 – Member/Officer Relations of the Council's Constitution? • Where you are recommending changes that impact on a community, has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out incorporating feedback from community engagement where appropriate? (See section on Equality and Diversity Implications, above)

Appendix 2

WHETHER A REPORT SHOULD BE PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

There must be strong justification given as to why it is not in the public interest for a report to be in the public section of the agenda. When agreeing to exclude the press and public, a committee must consider whether the public interest of withholding a report from publication outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Paragraph 11 of the Access to Information Rules (Constitution Part 4.2) lists the circumstances under which the Local Government Act 1972 allows exclusion of the press and public. These cover:

1. Information relating to any individual.
2. Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.
3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).
4. Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority.
5. Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.
6. Information which reveals that the authority proposes
 - (a) to give under any enactment a notice under or by virtue of which requirements are imposed on a person; or
 - (b) to make an order or direction under any enactment.
7. Information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime.

If the report does include information that falls into the above categories, where possible, if it is not vital information that the committee requires to make its decision, the information should be omitted from the body of the report (or only included as a confidential appendix) so that the report can be considered in public.

The Monitoring Officer must be consulted if the whole report needs to be treated as confidential.

The following heading and wording should be added as a header, so it appears on every page of the report.

NOT FOR PUBLICATION *This document contains exempt information under Paragraph [insert here the relevant number(s) from the list above] of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, and it would not be in the public interest for this information to be disclosed (information relating to [add here the relevant text from the relevant number(s) above])*

Under the Local Government Act, some information **must** be treated as confidential, and the press and public **must** be excluded. This applies to information given to the Council by a Government Department on terms which forbid its public disclosure or information which cannot be publicly disclosed by or under any enactment or by the order of a court.