

CHILDHOOD VISION SCREENING PROCUREMENT: AWARD OF CONTRACT

To: **Health Committee**

Meeting Date: **12th March 2015**

From: **Director of Public Health**

Electoral division(s): **All**

Forward Plan ref: **2015/035** *Key decision:* **Yes**

Purpose: **The purpose of this report is to ensure arrangements are in place to award the contract for the Childhood vision screening service, which is currently going through a competitive procurement process.**

Recommendation: **The Committee is asked to:**

- 1) Note and endorse the progress made to date in undertaking the procurement of a Childhood Vision Screening Service.**
- 2) Authorise the Director of Public Health, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Health Committee, to formally award the contract subject to compliance with all required legal processes**
- 3) Authorise the Director of Law, Property & Governance to approve and complete the necessary contract documentation.**

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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 In November 2014 the Health Committee agreed a proposal to re-procure childhood vision screening services to provide a consistent county-wide service for children in Cambridgeshire.
- 1.2 The aims of the Procurement are to commission a countywide Childhood Vision Screening Service that will reduce inequalities in access to screening and improve uptake, by procuring a school based model across the whole of the county. This includes all primary schools, independent and special schools.
- 1.3 A steering group is overseeing the procurement. This includes Cambridgeshire County Council officers as well as representatives from Healthwatch and the Optometry Professional Advisor to the East Anglia Area Team, NHS England.
- 1.4 The overall value of the tender will be over £600,000 for a 4 year plus one contract (i.e. over a period of five years).
- 1.5 A consultation with parents is underway to inform and involve them in the programme and to answer any queries they may have. We have worked with HealthWatch to develop a reply-paid postcard for distribution to parents of 3-4 year olds through schools and services, backed up by a webpage with further information and on-line feedback.

2. MAIN ISSUES

- 2.1 The final stages of the procurement will be reached during April 2015, following a competitive process, with full support from LGSS procurement, legal and finance teams. The County Council should be in a position to award the Children's Vision Screening Service contract in May 2015. This will be followed by an implementation period, with the intention that the new model is in operation by September 2015.
- 2.2 In order to comply with appropriate governance under the Committee structure, the Health Committee is asked to authorise the Director of Public Health, in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee, to formally award the contract, subject to compliance with all required legal processes, and to authorise the Director of Law, Property and Governance to approve and complete the necessary contract documentation.

3. ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PRIORITIES

3.1 Developing the local economy for the benefit of all

The early detection of amblyopia (Lazy eye) and poor sight impacts on educational achievement and future employment and life chances.

3.2 Helping people live healthy and independent lives

This procurement will provide the early detection of vision defects, with the aim of identifying children at an age where treatment has the potential to improve vision.

3.3 Supporting and protecting vulnerable people

There is some evidence that children from more deprived areas are more likely to have visual defects but also less likely to attend screening. Evidence suggests that a school based service offers greater uptake and therefore reduces inequalities.

4. SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Resource Implications

All costs of the contract are covered within the existing children's vision screening budget. No additional resources will be required.

4.2 Statutory, Risk and Legal Implications

A competitive procurement process has been followed, with advice from LGSS legal, finance and procurement teams.

4.3 Equality and Diversity Implications

The new model of service will increase accessibility of services and equity throughout the county. A community impact assessment has been completed (attached as Annex A).

4.4 Engagement and Consultation Implications

These are outlined in para 1.5

4.5 Localism and Local Member Involvement

There are no significant implications within this category

4.6 Public Health Implications

The importance of amblyopia (Lazy eye) as a health condition and the potential benefits of re-procuring the service in reducing the inequalities are outlined above.

Source Documents	Location
Children's Vision Screening Contract and Service Specification Community Impact Assessment 2014	Public Health Directorate, Shire Hall, Castle Hill, Cambridge CB3 0AP