

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 13 June 2019

REPORTING OFFICER: Director of Public Health

PORTFOLIO: Health and Wellbeing

SUBJECT: The procurement of a new Integrated Sexual Health Service for Halton and Warrington

WARDS: Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 In accordance with Standing Orders, the Executive Board is asked to note the outcome of a key decision to procure an Integrated Sexual Health Service in partnership with Warrington Borough Council and to enter into a contract with the provider who has been assessed as being the most economically advantageous and effective organisation to deliver for Halton and Warrington. The contract will commence in October 2019 and will be awarded for a period of 5 years with the option of two additional one year contracts.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That Executive Board notes the outcome of the recent procurement exercise and supports the previously agreed awarding of a joint contract for the provision of an Integrated Sexual Health Service for Halton and Warrington.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 In April 2018 the Executive Board approved a joint commissioning arrangement with Warrington Borough Council to discharge their commissioning responsibilities in relation to sexual health set out in the Health and Social Care Act 2012 and increase access to local services, ensure consistency of delivery and to realise efficiencies from the management of the service (EB Minutes 140/2018).

3.2 Warrington Borough Council has led on the procurement process with full participation from Halton's commissioners.

3.3 It is a mandatory requirement of the Public Health grant that Local Authorities commission sexual health services. The Integrated Sexual Health Service aims to improve sexual health by:

- Promoting good sexual health through primary prevention activities including behaviour change and those which aim to reduce the stigma associated with STIs, HIV and unwanted pregnancy;
- Providing rapid and easy access to open access STI testing, treatment and management services through a variety of mechanisms which may include online services;
- Providing rapid and easy access to open access reproductive health services including full range of contraceptive services; referral to NHS funded abortion services; support in planning pregnancy; through a variety of mechanisms which may include online services;
- Reducing late diagnosis of HIV and undiagnosed HIV and improving the sexual health of those living with HIV;
- Providing a quality service with appropriately trained staff; clinical governance and service user safety arrangements;
- Being responsive to local need (a) provide rapid response to outbreak management; and (b) through continuous improvement and response to the ongoing analysis of local population need;
- Operating as system leader in the local sexual health economy providing clinical leadership, development of and involvement in local networks and development of clear referral pathways between all directly connected and indirect service providers.

3.4 The Public Health Team have sought the provision of a high quality service that is both effective in improving universal outcomes through the use of evidence based interventions delivered by skilled practitioners, and also safeguards local people at risk of harm. The expectation is that the service will combine a balance of advice/guidance and promotional/prevention activity as well as direct evidenced based interventions for those that require clinical support. Such an approach will enhance the availability of local services that are joined up, supportive and affordable. The service will be delivered in a 'hub and spoke' system that will encourage locality based teams to be resourced to meet the identified needs of the population of the area they serve. The service will also commit to streamlining and improving access to public health/ health improvement services and will also seek to be co-located with partner organisations where appropriate.

3.5 A further joint procurement exercise was conducted with three prospective providers being interviewed. This process concluded on 30th April 2019, with one provider identified as the most economically advantageous and scoring the highest in terms of quality. Halton and Warrington Executives can now consider the proposed provider for approval.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Approval from the Operational Director (Legal and Democratic Services) has been gained as per Standing Orders and the Executive Board is

asked to support the decision to award the contract. Representatives from Halton have played a full role in all stages of the procurement. The contracts will be joint performance managed by both Boroughs and service standards will be monitored by commissioners and the contracts team.

- 4.2 The method of procurement has complied with the Council's procurement policy and Procurement Standing Orders and has utilised the Chest e-procurement portal. The process has complied with the requirements of the Public Contracts Regulations (2015) and has followed the Light-Touch Rules Regime for Health (Regulations 74 to 77).

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The contract for the new service will be awarded on the basis of quality and price, thus ensuring value for money. Consideration of the applications to deliver this service have resulted in the identification of efficiency savings which represent a reduction on current expenditure. Tender submissions have been evaluated using MEAT (Most Economic Advantageous Tender) principles.
- 5.2 Financial provision for the Service is contained within the Public Health Grant. A contract will be awarded for five years with two one year optional extensions. TUPE regulations will apply for affected staff, and measures will be put in place to review contract values on an annual basis in line with available resources. The estimated budget for the delivery of the integrated Sexual Health Services in Halton will therefore be a total of £5,000,000 for the initial five year contract, with a further £2,000,000 if the extensions are used.
- 5.3 The combined pre-procurement budget for the individual elements of the service was £12,310,000 for the five year contract period (Including both Halton and Warrington' contributions).

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children and Young People in Halton

The Government's aim is to enable local services to meet local needs, and robust sexual health services are a critical component in supporting the reduction of "risk taking" behaviours and supporting positive health outcomes. The service will support the effective and efficient delivery of both national and local strategies and action plans to meet the needs of local young people.

6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

None

6.3 A Healthy Halton

Universal and specialist public health services are important in promoting the health and wellbeing of people and reducing inequalities through targeted intervention for vulnerable and disadvantaged individuals. The service contributes to the delivery of the objectives of the Health and Wellbeing Board.

6.4 A Safer Halton

Reducing the incidence of crime, improving Community Safety and reducing the fear of crime have an impact on health outcomes particularly on mental health. There are close links between the service and on areas such as safeguarding, mental health, substance misuse and domestic violence.

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

Risk has been a particular consideration in the tender evaluation process. Robust service monitoring should provide early warning of any performance issues. The proposals are not so significant as to require a full risk assessment.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

All contractors will be required to demonstrate that they embrace and comply with the Equality Act, and services will be monitored to ensure this is the case.

9.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

None under the meaning of the Act.