

Cabinet

10 October 2017

Advocacy, Information, Advice and Support Services (Adults and Children's)

Recommendation

That Cabinet approves proceeding with an appropriate procurement process for the provision of Advocacy, Information, Advice and Support Services and authorises the Strategic Director of People Group to enter into all relevant contracts on terms and conditions acceptable to the Joint Managing Director (Resources).

1.0 Background and Rationale

- 1.1 There are currently 9 Advocacy, Information, Advice and Support Services, three services related to health are dealt with elsewhere on the agenda. The remaining 6 commissioned by Warwickshire County Council, through People Group are statutory services and listed below.
- Appointee Services (2 contracts)
 - Care Act Generic Advocacy
 - Independent Mental Capacity Advocacy (IMCA)
 - Children's Advocacy & Independent Visitors
 - Special Education Needs and/or Disability Information Advice and Support Services, (SENDIAS)
- 1.2 The six contracts are currently due to expire on 31st March 2018. The current combined annual values for the services 2017-2018 is £1,048,762.

Overview of Contracts (Adult's)

Contract	Term	Start	End	Contract Type	Contract Partners	Contract Value
Appointee	3yrs +1	2014	2018	Framework	WCC	£360,000 (paid quarterly in advance for actuals)
Care Act	3yrs +1	2014	2018	Framework	WCC	£196,000 (paid quarterly in arrears for actuals)
IMCA	3yrs +1	2014	2018	Block	WCC & CCC	£82,000

Overview of Contracts (Children's)

Contract	Term	Start	End	Contract Type	Contract Partners	Contract Value
Children's Advocacy	3yrs, 1+1	2012	2018	Block	WCC & CCC	£125,000 WCC contract value (CCC contract value £125,000 paid direct to provider)
SENDIAS	2yrs, 1+1	2014	2018	Block	WCC	£124,762 + £36,000 SEND Reform Grant TBC Dec 2017

- 1.3 These services enable Warwickshire to meet a number of statutory requirements which set out how people should be able to be active citizens and have a say whilst recognising that some people may need support to make this happen.
- 1.4 Currently Coventry City council jointly commission services with Warwickshire for IMCA and Children's Advocacy. Moving forwards Coventry has expressed an intention to continue with these arrangements and potentially including Care Act Advocacy.
- 1.5 Whilst two separate reports are being presented to Cabinet, the procurement process of all 9 advocacy services commissioned by WCC is being undertaken with a joined up process, approach and timeline. A joint working group has been established involving commissioners in Public Health and People Group, led by Procurement, to ensure consistency of approach across the Council and consistency in outcomes for Warwickshire residents.

2.0 Overview of the 6 Statutory Advocacy, Information, Advice and Support Services.

Adult Services

- 2.1 **Appointee, Care Act and Independent Mental Capacity Advocate (IMCA)** - Warwickshire County Council People Group currently commissions a framework of Advocacy (Appointee, Care Act, IMCA and Independent Mental Health Advocacy (Public Health)). IMCA and IMHA are contracted across Coventry and Warwickshire.

An **Appointee** is a person who has been appointed by the Department of Work & Pensions (DWP) or a local authority to receive welfare benefits on behalf of someone who is unable to manage their affairs, generally because of mental incapacity.

Care Act Advocacy - for eligible individuals to have independent advocate to help them be actively involved in their care and support

process, including their care assessments, support planning, reviews and safeguarding enquiries and adult reviews (previously serious case reviews).

IMCAs - are a legal safeguard for people who lack the capacity to make specific important decisions: including making decisions about where they live and about serious medical treatment options. IMCAs are mainly instructed to represent people where there is no one independent of services, such as a family member or friend, who is able to represent the person.

Children's Services

- 2.2 **Children's Advocacy and Independent Visitors** - Warwickshire County Council People Group and Coventry City Council currently jointly commission a block contract for Children's Advocacy and Independent Visitor's Service. The advocacy service is to provide independent advice and support to children looked after and children in need to ensure that their voice is heard or to support with complaints. An independent visitor is a volunteer befriender for children looked after.
- 2.3 **Special Educational Needs and/or Disability Information, Advice and Support Services (SENDIAS)** - Warwickshire County Council currently commissions a block contract for SENDIAS. This was previously known as Parent Partnership. The service provides term time impartial information, advice and support on all matters relating to special educational needs and disabilities to children and young people up to the age of 25 with SEND, parents and carers of a child with SEND, and staff involved in the provision of education services. This may involve case work to support children, young people and families; with *independent support workers* enabling them to navigate the system effectively and support positive outcomes when needed.

3.0 Key Issues

Adult Services

- 3.1 **Appointee Services** - Historically the main client group of the Appointee service was older people aged 65 and over living in residential care and Learning Disability customers living in Supported Living. Due to changes in the social care landscape with a shift from traditional residential building based provision to independent community living; appointee support has moved from an average of 7 to 10 years in duration to 20+ years for individual customers. This is a growing service and budget pressure for Warwickshire.
- 3.2 **Care Act Advocacy** – There is evidence of a pressure to source out of county provision for Warwickshire residents outside of contracted services boundaries. There is evidence to suggest that we should revisit the process to ensure that timely support is available for individuals being discharged from a hospital setting. Feedback has been given indicating issues with faxing and recording processes which can impact on the referral process.

- 3.3 **Independent Mental Capacity Advocacy** – Current contracted services are operating with a waiting list for services due to demand. There is evidence of a pressure to source out of county provision for Warwickshire residents outside of contracted services boundaries and feedback has been given indicating issues with faxing and recording processes which can impact on the referral process.

Children's Services

- 3.4 **Children's Advocacy and Independent Visitors** – Current data and costing model varies from other Advocacy services. Following WCC's recent Ofsted inspection more could be done to increase awareness of and referrals for advocacy and independent visitors. Procurement exercise enables a review of local demand and delivery to be reviewed to ensure equity across the contracted area and for those young people placed out of county.
- 3.5 **Special Educational Needs and/or Disability Information, Advice and Support Services (SENDIAS)** – Evidence to suggest that work could be done to raise awareness and access to the service to increase early intervention with families and promoting the voice of the child.
- 3.6 Strategic Commissioning has undertaken market testing and engagement with stakeholders, providers and customers to develop enhance and address these key issues and inform future models and service specifications for these 6 Statutory Advocacy, Information, Advice and Support Services.

4.0 Proposal

- 4.1 The contract period will be for a period of 3 years, with options to extend for period(s) up to 24 months, subject to satisfactory performance by the provider. This will be replicated through all of the advocacy services contracts across the Council so that they can be reviewed together at the end of the new contract period.
- 4.2 An outcomes based performance framework will be used to measure service user outcomes, provider performance and activity for each of Statutory Advocacy, Information, Advice and Support services. This will enable commissioners to monitor performance against each service area.
- 4.3 The new service will be outcome focused, placing the needs of service users at the core of service delivery, and aligned to the Advocacy Outcomes Framework produced by the National Development Team for Inclusion. The framework details outcomes in four main areas:
- **Changes for the individual**, to include: increased voice and personal control, improved opportunities, challenging injustice, increased independence, individual's rights are upheld
 - **Changes for the health and social care sector**, to include: improved service quality and experience for the user, service change and improvement, coproduced services
 - **Changes in the wider community**, to include: increased social inclusion and contribution, and exercising of democratic rights

- **Changes in the advocacy organisation**, to include: improved accessibility of advocacy provision, improved governance and application of best practice, including coproduction of the service.

5.0 Timescales associated with the decision and next steps

5.1 Following cabinet's decision, the table below sets out the critical milestones and key deadlines for the tendering and commissioning of the Statutory Advocacy, Information, Advice and Support services.

Milestones	Deadline
Cabinet meeting	12 October 2017
Tender process begins	1 November 2017
Tender process closes	30 November 2017
Tender evaluation period	30 December 2018
Contract award	26 January 2018
Service transition period	February and March 2018
New service starts	1 April 2018

5.2 Cabinet is asked to note that commissioners are currently seeking permission to extend the existing contracts expiration date to 30th June 2018, to allow for a longer transition period to new services. If this is approved, the new services will commence on 1st July 2018.

Background papers

None

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