

Meeting: Cabinet Meeting

Date: 15 June 2021

Wards Affected: All

Report Title: Sexual Health Prevention Service

Service start date is intended to be 1st July 2021. Decision is required as soon as possible.

Cabinet Member Contact Details: Jackie Stockman, Lead for Public Health and Adult Social Care. Jackie.stockman@torbay.gov.uk

Director/Assistant Director Contact Details: Dr Lincoln Sargeant, Director of Public Health Lincoln.sargeant@torbay.gov.uk

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 Torbay Public Health team require a decision to direct award a contract for sexual health prevention service. The award will be given to two providers, already delivering within Torbay. In 2017/18, the main procurement with DCC leading failed and the award was abandoned due to a challenge.
- 1.2 Since that time, there have been several attempts to reshape the specification, seek further consultations and relaunch a full partnership procurement process.
- 1.3 Due to delays beyond our control, including COVID-19, a direct award decision is requested to enable the services locally delivered to residents to move forward. The contract is over the £50,000 limit set in the Officer Scheme of Delegation therefore Cabinet's approval to award the contract is required.

2. Reason for Proposal and its benefits

The benefit to Torbay of direct awarding this contract is:

- a) Delivering a fit-for purpose (including COVID-19 recovery) specification and contract. This will meet the prevention needs of vulnerable populations, including sexually active young adults, gay and bisexual men, BAME populations and people living with HIV as well as the wider sexually active population
- b) Supporting a safer recovery from COVID-19 as adults meet up and resume socialising and sexual activity
- c) In line with the timing of the headline clinical contract, due for reprocurement in 2023, in partnership with Devon County Council.

We want Torbay and its residents to thrive.

We want Torbay to be a place where we have turned the tide on poverty and tackled inequalities; where our children and older people will have high aspirations and where there are quality jobs, good pay and affordable housing for our residents.

We want Torbay to be the premier resort in the UK, with a vibrant arts and cultural offer for our residents and visitors to enjoy; where our built and natural environment is celebrated and where we play our part in addressing the climate change emergency.

- 2.1 The proposals in this report help us to deliver this ambition by supporting Torbay residents to thrive - it will enable men and women to make well informed choices that support reproduction, sexual health and wellbeing.

This has an impact on wider issues, not least supporting the role of the corporate parent (young Care Leavers are at an increased likelihood of being teenage parents), addressing cycles of poverty and deprivation by supporting reproductive and parenting choices, supporting people with learning disabilities live full lives as well as a thriving economy and addressing climate change.

- 2.2 The reasons for the decision are that it is a Torbay-led solution to an ongoing delay, beyond our control. By making a direct award to the local providers, it enables a high degree of value for money (by not having to launch a full procurement for what will by then only be a 12-18 month service (*likely resulting in failed procurement due to the short timescale of any service*)).

The financial decision has already been accounted for within the ring-fence Public Health grant and agreed internally by senior responsible officers as well as being presented to Cabinet on previous occasions.

3. Recommendation(s) / Proposed Decision

- (i) That Northern Devon Healthcare Trust and The Eddystone Trust be directly awarded the contract to deliver a sexual health prevention service, from 1 July 2021.

Appendices

None

Background Documents

None

Supporting Information

1. Introduction

- 1.1 A full procurement has been attempted in partnership with DCC but for a range of reasons beyond the control of Torbay Council, has failed since 2017-18. Since that time, services have been continuing but are unfit for purpose. Current contracts all expire on 30th June, after which time there will be no prevention or HIV support services for any Torbay resident unless a direct award can be made.
- 1.2 This decision to direct award will support renewing and refreshing this service and making fit for the future, including immediate COVID recovery.
- 1.3 It will also bring the timing of the contracts in line with the main clinical contract, allowing for smarter re-procurement in 2023.

2. Options under consideration

- 2.1 A wide range of options have been considered, as reflected in the three consultations delivered during 2017, 2019 and 2021.
- 2.2 The alternative options to a full procurement process is to either cease the services completely or to direct award. No further contract extensions can be granted, and the specifications underpinning these are outdated.
- 2.3 If a full procurement process was initiated by DCC & Torbay Council now, it would take 6-18 months. This is disproportionate to both the contract value and time available – a full reprocurement is planned during 2023.
- 2.4 The option to direct award accounts for the time available, builds on existing partnerships and willingness of providers as well as enables some stability in terms of recruitment, future planning and consistency.

3. Financial Opportunities and Implications

- 3.1 The budget for this service has been agreed and sits within the Public Health ring-fenced grant. The budgets is also supported within the Public Health business plan and via the waiver process. This decision is supported by Martin Phillips, Dr Lincoln Sargeant and Jackie Stockman.

4. Legal Implications

- 4.1 This process has been through a VEAT process and has had no challenges from the market. There is a sound legal basis for direct awarding the sexual health prevention service.

5. Engagement and Consultation

- 5.1 This contract has been subject to three rounds of public consultation. At each stage, adjustments have been made to accommodate and meet the needs of Torbay residents as well as the workforce delivering the service.

6. Purchasing or Hiring of Goods and/or Services

- 6.1 Not applicable to this service.

7. Tackling Climate Change

- 7.1 The proposed direct award has no direct impact on tackling climate change at this time. Suppliers source responsibly products such as condoms where possible.

8. Associated Risks

- 8.1 Any legal risks have been mitigated through the consultation processes and VEAT process.
- 8.2 If the process is not implemented, this will mean that Public Health fails to meet its requirements to provide a preventative sexual health service for its population. Beyond this requirement, it will be a failure to take an opportunity to support a positive recovery from COVID-19 and meet the ongoing needs of resident populations.

Equality Impacts

9.	Identify the potential positive and negative impacts on specific groups			
	Positive Impact	Negative Impact & Mitigating Actions	Neutral Impact	
Older or younger people	<p>Younger people (13-24) will receive a modernised C-Card offer which will improve sexual and reproductive health knowledge and access to services. This will include a digital registration option for those aged over 16.</p>			
People with caring Responsibilities			<p>The current service offer for carers of people living with HIV may change. The service offer will become time bound and outcome focussed. There will continue to be a good level of service from HIV specialist treatment services as well as a range of wider statutory and non-statutory services in Torbay. Some of these services will be less equipped to address specific HIV/AIDS related issues. However, those that meet the eligibility criteria will be able to access the social care and health advocacy provided by the Devon Advocacy Consortium. The training programme will also proactively address stigma associated with sex and relationships and STI status, in particular HIV and living with HIV</p>	

<p>People with a disability</p>			<p>The current service offer for people living with HIV may change. The service offer will become time bound and outcome focussed. There will continue to be a good level of service from HIV specialist treatment services as well as a range of wider statutory and non-statutory services in Torbay. Some of these services will be less equipped to address specific HIV/AIDS related issues. However, those that meet the eligibility criteria will be able to access the social care and health advocacy provided by the Devon Advocacy Consortium. The training programme will also proactively address stigma associated with sex and relationships and STI status, in particular HIV and living with HIV.</p>
<p>Women or men</p>	<p>The community based interventions are more likely to address reproductive health as well as sexual health. This is likely to enable more women to benefit from community based interventions.</p>		
<p>People who are black or from a minority ethnic background (BME) <i>(Please note Gypsies / Roma are within this community)</i></p>	<p>Some Black and Minority Ethnic people can be at increased risk of poor sexual health outcomes. The new prevention service is intended to offer improved community-</p>		

	based interventions which meet the needs of specific groups.		
Religion or belief (including lack of belief)			The prevention service is unlikely to have any significant impact on people who hold a religious view or lack of religious belief.
People who are lesbian, gay or bisexual	Some gay and bisexual people can be at increased risk of poor sexual health outcomes. The new prevention service is intended to offer improved community-based interventions which meet the needs of specific groups.		
People who are transgendered	Some transgender people can be at increased risk of poor sexual health outcomes. The new prevention service is intended to offer improved community-based interventions which meet the needs of specific groups.		
People who are in a marriage or civil partnership			The prevention service is unlikely to have any significant specific impact on people who are in a marriage or a civil partnership
Women who are pregnant / on maternity leave			The prevention service is unlikely to have any significant specific impact on women who are pregnant or are on maternity leave.
Socio-economic impacts (Including impact on child poverty issues and deprivation)	Some people in Torbay living in more deprived areas can be at increased risk of poor sexual health outcomes. The new prevention service is intended to offer improved community-based interventions which meet the		

		needs of specific groups. Improving sexual and reproductive health outcomes can enable families to plan conceptions, use contraception and better manage the impact of unintended pregnancy on families.		
	Public Health impacts (How will your proposal impact on the general health of the population of Torbay)	Community based interventions will be improved and more able to intelligently- respond to need within Torbay amongst a range of groups and communities.		The service offer for both carers of and people living with HIV will change to become more time bound and outcomes focussed. Services which address the needs of people in Torbay (such as those for people with long-term health conditions and disabilities) will be encouraged to address stigma and ensure that their services are accessible to all.
10..	Cumulative Council Impact (proposed changes elsewhere which might worsen the impacts identified above)	By developing a fresh programme of training for the workforce, this is a positive contribution towards a skilled, able and confident Childrens Services workforce which can address healthy relationships, consent and sexual wellbeing. This specifically supports the challenges presented by higher rates of teenage conceptions and HIV in Torbay.		
11.	Cumulative Community Impacts (proposed changes within the wider community (inc the public sector) which might worsen the impacts identified above)	By developing a fresh programme of training for the workforce, this is a positive contribution towards a skilled, able and confident wider Public Health workforce which can address healthy relationships, consent and sexual wellbeing. This specifically supports the challenges presented by higher rates of teenage conceptions and HIV in Torbay.		