

Strategic Commissioning & Investment Unit
222 Upper Street
N1 1XR

Report of: Director of Adult Social Care

Date: 29 July 2022

Ward(s): All

Subject: Contract Extension for the provision of a Wellbeing Service for Adults

1. Synopsis

- 1.1. This report seeks approval to extend the Wellbeing Service contract with Age UK Islington, to extend for a period of up to eleven months - from 1 October 2022 until 31 August 2023.
- 1.2. The current contract commenced on 29 June 2020. The Council issued a 13-month extension in 2021 which is due to end on 30 September 2022. The contract can be further extended until end of August 2023. The Council would then need to take a formal decision around arrangements post 31 August 2023.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. To approve the recommendation to extend the Wellbeing Support contract as outlined in this report.
- 2.2. To note that the total value of the contract extension from 1 October 2022 to 31 August 2023 will be £446,050.

3. Date the decision is to be taken

- 3.1. 29 July 2022

4. Background

As part of Islington's' Corporate Priorities, Adult Social Care have a vision that Islington will be a place made up of strong, inclusive, and connected communities, where regardless of background, people have fair and equal access to adult social care support that enables residents to live healthy, fulfilling and independent lives. Early intervention and prevention are key to this commitment of ensuring that residents are supported at the right time with the right support to achieve maximum resilience and independence.

4.1. Nature of the service

- 4.1.1. The Wellbeing service aims to maximise wellbeing to promote the best possible physical, mental, and emotional health through enablement short term support; Information and Advice to support self-determination and self-care and through access to opportunities for social interaction and community connections. As well as information and advice the service supports residents with social interaction and community connectivity by facilitating many group activities including, Art workshops, Exercise classes, Music appreciation and visits to galleries and the theatre. The service also runs a helpline which handled 9400 incoming and 5200 outgoing calls during the 12-month period. 59% of these calls from clients and a further 24% from practitioners/professionals. Volunteers completed over 3000 wellbeing checks resulting in only 14.5% requiring further support. There is also an Enablement service offering support around, housing issues, activities, emotional support, befriending services, and requests for charitable grants.
- 4.1.2. The service is delivered to adults living in Islington. Whilst the focus is on adults who are 50 plus, there are no age restrictions in recognition that adults may benefit from support at any age. The service works in close partnership with the Council's Reablement Service to support people to transition from statutory services, or whose needs do not meet statutory support thresholds. Individuals may need support to:
- Maintain or regain a greater level of independence
 - Prevent their needs escalating to a level where they require statutory support
- 4.1.3. Since the start date of the current contract, the Council has developed its prevention and early intervention ambitions in a way that were not possible to foresee at the time the contract was procured. The Council is working with partners to develop a more cohesive, easily navigable early intervention and prevention offer that promotes strengths-based practice, independence, and community connections to enable people to live the lives they want with as little intrusion from statutory services as possible. The Council is developing an Alliance Partnership for prevention and early intervention and needs to ensure any future

service is fit for purpose. A procurement strategy articulating what we would want and need from any future wellbeing service will develop as the Alliance Partnership work progresses. Any future service needs to be fit for purpose and add value to the wider prevention and early intervention offer. An extension to the current contract will give us further time to consider what we need to procure in the future, in line with Fairer Together developments, and to consider different delivery models. The Council may need to extend the contract further to give sufficient time to develop the Council's prevention and early intervention strategy, this is yet to be confirmed.

- 4.1.4. Under the Care Act 2014 the Council has a statutory duty to provide or arrange services that help prevent people developing needs for care and support.
- 4.1.5. There are no concerns about quality of the incumbent provider. Officers undertake a range of contract monitoring to ensure quality of provision. The service is working well and delivers under part of Islington's Corporate Plan to Making every contact count (MECC) with the aim to make the most of every opportunity to help local people improve their health, wellbeing and quality of life. In the last year , AUKI conducted 3418 Wellbeing checks from a target of >1200 with 96.5% of clients reporting an increased positivity and confidence to make their own decisions.

4.2. **Estimated value**

- 4.2.1. The total contract value is £1,558,000. The annual budget for this service in 2022/23 is £486,660.
- 4.2.2. The cost of extending the contract for a further 11 months will be £446,050.

The contract extension is not seeking to make any savings on the existing contract. A £40,000 saving was made on the current contract in 2020 when the Council, combined three AUKI Contracts, (Information & Advice, Enablement and Activities). AUKI delivers added value through their commitment to the Central Point of Access which launched recently. They resource this through their existing resources, thereby currently at no extra cost to the council. We have explored further opportunities for efficiencies in the contract but at this time any savings would have a detrimental impact on the service's reach and outcomes for residents.

4.3. **Timetable**

- 4.3.1. The current contract expires on 30 September 2022. The proposed contract extension would extend the contract to 31 August 2023.

4.4. Options appraisal

Option	Recommended	Notes
Do nothing and allow contract to come to a natural end	No	<p>This option would result in a high risk of residents needs not being met as there is not sufficient time to undertake procurement for a new service.</p> <p>There will also be a risk of not fulfilling the Council's statutory duties in relation to Prevention.</p> <p>There is a risk that needs will escalate resulting in higher demand for statutory health and social care services.</p>
Deliver in-house	No	<p>There is insufficient time to set up an in-house service before the current contract ends.</p> <p>The Council is committed to supporting development of the Voluntary and Community Sector. This service works as part of a network of other VCS organisations including grant-funded support.</p> <p>VCS organisations are well adept at delivering very localised support and reaching communities and those most in need of support.</p> <p>There is potential stigma for some residents accessing council run prevention and early intervention services.</p>
Extend contract and undertake procurement for future service	Yes	<p>This option is the best means of retaining the current local provision, benefiting from the Voluntary and Community Sector expertise and connections to ensure residents' wellbeing is optimised.</p> <p>This will enable further scoping of any future wellbeing service required as part of the wider prevention and early intervention offer for adults.</p>

4.5. Key Considerations

Key Consideration	Notes
Social Value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The current service contributes to the Council's social value agenda in several ways including volunteering opportunities for local people. AUKI are currently expanding the number and type of volunteer roles to support Age UK Islington clients. They have a Volunteer Recruitment Administrator (VRA) already in post who currently works on recruiting and placing volunteers and are devising a fundraising strategy to secure additional funds for volunteer projects. The VRA works with other organisations to recruit volunteers such as universities, colleges, Voluntary Action Islington, Corporate partners as well as general social media such as Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn. Targeted recruitment will focus particular roles to specific groups who may have similar interests and would like to share these when volunteering. Potential volunteers learn new skills, get work experience, meet new people, access health benefits, as well as making a difference to someone's life or assisting an organisation. This in turn links into Islington's vision of strong, inclusive and connected communities. The original contract was signed before the wider emphasis on Social Value so we will continue to work in partnership with the provider to identify other opportunities for increased social value.
Best Value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Officers intend to extend the contract on the same terms as the current arrangement – see section 4.2. Officers intend to maintain current contract management arrangements over the lifetime of the extension, to support continuous improvement in the service. The current provider has been working with VCS partners to establish a Central Point of Access (CPOA) to VCS support, committing resource to ensure an easier pathway for residents who would benefit from support to maintain independence and maximise wellbeing. The CPOA was launched in June 2022.
TUPE/Staffing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are no TUPE/staffing implications arising from the contract variation.

Please see below key risks and mitigations officers have considered for the contract extension:

Risk	Mitigation
Risk provider does not agree with proposal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commissioners maintain dialogue with the provider to align approach.

Risk provider does not agree with proposal without cost uplift	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commissioners to manage with Finance in line with other inflationary/uplift costs.
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- 4.6. The Employment Relations Act 1999 (Blacklist) Regulations 2010 explicitly prohibit the compilation, use, sale, or supply of blacklists containing details of trade union members and their activities. Following a motion to full Council on 26 March 2013, all tenderers will be required to complete an anti-blacklisting declaration. Where an organisation is unable to declare that they have never blacklisted, they will be required to evidence that they have 'self-cleansed'. The Council will not award a contract to organisations found guilty of blacklisting unless they have demonstrated 'self-cleansing' and taken adequate measures to remedy past actions and prevent re-occurrences.

5. Implications

5.1. Financial Implications

- 5.1.1. The Wellbeing Service for Adults is one of the Voluntary and Community Sector contracts that sits within the Adult Social Care base budget. The budget for this service for 2022-23 is £486,600.
- 5.1.2. The cost of this extension will be £446,050 for 11 months. This is a continuation of the current cost of the contract and therefore, this does not create a budgetary pressure on the Adult Social Care budget.
- 5.1.3. Payment of London Living Wage is already a requirement of the contract and should not result in any additional costs.

Implications provided by: Kelly Ward, Assistant Finance Manager, 15/06/2022.

5.2. Legal Implications

- 5.2.1. The contract extension to the end of August 2023 which is recommended by this Report is provided for in the contract itself; the council must give at least three months' written notice of the extension to the Service Provider.
- 5.2.2. Paragraph 14.5 of the council's Procurement Rules provides that all proposed optional contract extensions, where the original procurement strategy was a key decision, shall be reviewed and challenged by the Commissioning and Procurement Board, unless otherwise agreed by the Head of Service, Strategic Procurement and Supply Assurance (or their nominated representative).

5.3. Environmental Implications and contribution to achieving a net zero carbon Islington by 2030

- 5.3.1. An Environmental Implications Assessment has been completed with regards to this service at point of Contract Award.

5.4. Equalities Impact Assessment

- 5.4.1. The council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and to advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it (section 149 Equality Act 2010). The council has a duty to have due regard to the need to remove or minimise disadvantages, take steps to meet needs, in particular steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, and encourage people to participate in public life. The council must have due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding.
- 5.4.2. An Equalities Impact Assessment was completed on was completed prior to the procurement of the current contract.
- 5.4.3. This identified that there would be no differential impacts on the broad population and positive impact on clients accessing the service. A contract extension will have no negative impact on any of the equality groups accessing this service or working in the service.

6. Conclusion and reasons for the decision

- 6.1. The decision has been approved to extend the Wellbeing Service contract, to ensure continued Wellbeing Service provision as the Council develops its plans for a future prevention and early intervention offer.

7. Record of the decision

- 7.1. I have today decided to take the decision set out in section 2 of this report for the reasons set out above.

Signed by:

Director of Adult Social Care

Date: **Date the decision was taken**

Appendices:

- N/A

Background papers:

- Contract Award document

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