

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

29 March 2022

Subject: Wiltshire Children's Community Health Services-Future Commissioning

Cabinet Member: Cllr Laura Mayes, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Skills

Ian Blair-Pilling, Cabinet Member for Public Health, Public Protection, Leisure, Libraries, Facilities Management and Operational Assets

Key Decision: Key

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide Cabinet with the information to decide on the short-term future of Wiltshire's Public Health Nursing (PHN) Services beyond April 2023. These services are currently delivered by HCRG Care Group (previously Virgin Care Services) as part of Wiltshire Children's Community Healthcare Services (WCCHS) contract.

The HCRG contract is a collaborative commissioning arrangement between the Council and NHS Bath and North-East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire Clinical Commissioning Group (BSW CCG). The total contract value for 20/21 is £13.3m of which Wiltshire Council contributes 47.4% to fund Public Health Nursing (PHN) Services and 2.5% to fund Speech and Language Therapy services to support children with Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs). The five-year contract for WCCHS, awarded to HCRG Care Group (HCRG) in 2016, was extended by two years and expires on 31st March 2023.

Prior to 2016, children's community services were provided across six separate organisations and parents/ carers of children with special educational needs reported healthcare provision to be confusing and disjointed. It was decided to bring the services together as one overarching children's community health service to create a more pathway-based, less medicalised approach to care.

An initial assessment of a long list of options for the future commissioning of WCCHS was presented to the Wiltshire Locality Commissioning Group (WLCG) and it was agreed for an in-depth option appraisal of the following to be undertaken:

1. Combined WCCHS – one single provider of universal and specialist services across Wiltshire (the current model) – contracted as a single lot
2. Combined WCCHS – one single provider (current model) - contracted as 2 separate lots

3. Disaggregate the current service - LA in-house PHN services and CCG commission specialist community health services separately

Covid 19, specifically the rapid surge in the Omicron variant, has impacted on this situation. The government has delayed the implementation date for Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) until July 2022, rather than 1st April as expected, to allow the passage of the Health and Care Bill to pass through Parliament which has resulted in a delay to the ICB being able to endorse a long-term model. CCG capacity is affected as staff are being diverted to Covid response. Covid is also limiting the Council and CCG's capacity and ability to engage with families, children, and young people, especially face to face, and their engagement in co-production is vital if the model changes significantly.

Proposal(s)

It is recommended that:

Cabinet agrees to the negotiation of a one year contract which is held by the CCG with HCRG Care Group for a further 12 months until 31st March 2024 to enable officers to complete due diligence on the options outlined and undertake a full consultation with children, young people and families as required. It is recommended that the decision to award a one year contract is delegated to the Director of Procurement & Commissioning in consultation with the Director of Public Health, Corporate Director-People and Corporate Director-Resources/Deputy Chief Executive, and the Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Skills and Cabinet Member for Public Health, Public Protection, Leisure, Libraries, Facilities Management and Operational Assets.

A further paper will come to April Cabinet to recommend the long-term model of a future service.

Reason for Proposal(s)

The contract with HCRG Care Group to deliver the Wiltshire Children's Community Healthcare Service expires on 31 March 2023 following completion of a 2-year extension to a 5 year contract. There is a need to decide on the provision of Public Health Nursing Services from 1 April 2023.

Terence Herbert
Chief Executive

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

29 March 2022

Subject: Wiltshire Children's Community Health Services-Future Commissioning

Cabinet Member: Cllr Laura Mayes, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Skills

Ian Blair-Pilling, Cabinet Member for Public Health and Public Protection, Leisure, Libraries, Facilities Management and Operational Assets

Key Decision: Key

Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of the report is to provide Cabinet with the information to decide on the short-term future of Wiltshire's Public Health Nursing Services (PHNS), currently delivered by HCRG Care Group (HCRG) as part of Wiltshire's Children's Community Healthcare Services (WCCHS) contract

Relevance to the Council's Business Plan

- 2.1 The Public Health Nursing Service (PHNS) is central to the guiding themes of prevention and early intervention, improving social mobility and tackling inequalities set out in the Wiltshire Council Business Plan Principles 2022-2032. Core to any PHNS is to lead the delivery of the Healthy Child Programme, an evidence based universal programme for children aged 0-19 (currently being updated to extend from 19-24 years). The programme provides the bedrock for health improvement, public health and reducing inequalities. Expectant parents, parents/carers, children and young people are empowered to make healthy choices and additional support is provided proportionate to need as required.
- 2.2. The universal nature of PHNS provides an opportunity to gather population health data that can inform our local Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and enable a better understanding of our local communities, thus also contributing to this guiding theme.

Background

- 3.1 Wiltshire Council and Bath and North-East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire Clinical Commissioning Group (BSW CCG) currently contract with HCRG Care Group (HCRG) to deliver Wiltshire Children's Community Health Service (WCCHS). This service delivers PHNS and specialist children's community health services.

3.2 The original contract commenced in April 2016 and was for a period of 5 years (expiring 31st March 2021). The contract included an option to extend for a further 2 years. This option was exercised in April 2021 and the contract will now expire at the end of March 2023.

3.3 Prior to 2016, children's community services had been provided across six separate organisations; some of the specialist services were sitting outside of Wiltshire county borders and required parents / carers to travel outside of Wiltshire for appointments. This also limited the extent to which community services could provide services embedded within education and respite settings. Parents / carers of children with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) reported this to be a confusing and disjointed healthcare provision. For this reason, and to create a more pathway-based, less medicalised approach to care, it was decided to bring the services together as one overarching children's community health service.

3.4 The total contract value for WCCHS for 2021/22 is £13,331,426, of which Wiltshire Council contributes 47% to fund Public Health Nursing Services and 3% to fund Speech and Language Therapy Services to support children with Education Health Care Plans. from its Public Health Grant on the Public Health Nursing Contract. BSW CCG contribute the remaining 50% to fund Children's Specialist Community Health Services and the Looked After Children Service. The table below shows how the funding is split between commissioners.

Commissioner	Value	Proportion
Wiltshire Council (Public Health)	£6,316,649	47%
Wiltshire Council (Children's Commissioning)	£336,277	3%
BSW Clinical Commissioning Group	£6,678,500	50%

3.5 Wiltshire Council is responsible for PHNS in Wiltshire. PHNS is a service directly funded by the Public Health Grant which the local authority receives from the Department of Health and Social Care. The service forms part of the Director of Public Health's responsibilities for 'any of the Secretary of State's public health protection or health improvement functions that they delegate to local authorities, either by arrangement or under regulations – these include services mandated by regulations made under section 6C of the NHS 2006 Act, inserted by section 18 of the 2012 Act'.

3.6 The PHNS is required to deliver against the requirements set out in the Health & Social Care Act 2012 to provide a universal service for all expectant parents, children and young people, with an emphasis on prevention and support. This includes leading on the delivery and co-ordination of the Healthy Child Programme 0-19, a national public health programme based on the best available evidence to achieve good outcomes for children. The mandated elements of the PHNS are five universal reviews delivered by the health visiting service from pregnancy through to two and a half years of age, and the National Child Measurement Programme.

3.7 The PHNS service is made up of the following key elements:

- Health Visiting - 0-4 years old
- School Nursing - 5-19 years old
- Family Nurse Partnership (FNP) – a strengths-based programme to support young parents. In Wiltshire this is targeted at young women who conceive at or below the age of nineteen. It is a licenced programme that provides intensive support from pregnancy until the child's second birthday. It is not mandated.
- The National Child Measurement Programme - delivered through the School Nursing Service provides robust public health surveillance data on child weight status to inform national and local planning to reduce obesity

3.8 BSW CCG is responsible for commissioning the following services:

- Community Paediatrics
- Speech & Language Therapy
- Integrated Therapies (Physiotherapy & Occupational Therapy)
- Children's Community Nursing Services
- Children's Continuing Care
- Learning Disability Nursing Services
- Children's Safeguarding Services (named nurses & specialist safeguarding nurses)
- Paediatric Audiology (West Wiltshire only)
- Children's Continence Service
- Looked After Children's Service

3.9 The Looked After Children's (LAC) Service provides specialist health assessments, personal health planning and intervention, advice and support to children and young people who are looked after and their parent/carers. It also provides specialist advice to partner agencies on the health needs of children looked after and actively participates in care planning and review meetings. These services are delivered in conjunction with universal services. Currently review health checks and assessments for looked after children are undertaken by health visitors (up to age 5) and school nurses (over the age of 5).

Main Considerations for the Council

4.1 The Council is looking at 3 potential options for commissioning the service:

- Combined WCCHS – one single provider of universal and specialist services across Wiltshire (the current model) – contracted as a single lot

- Combined WCCHS – one single provider (current model) - contracted as 2 separate lots
 - Disaggregate the current service - LA in-house PHN services and CCG commission specialist community health services separately
- 4.2 It is necessary to complete due diligence exercises and further engagement with children, young people and families to be able to recommend a preferred option going forward.
- 4.3 Due to the pressures on the health system currently due to COVID, the establishment of the Integrated Care Systems to replace CCGs has been delayed until July 2022. The BSW ICS will need to sign off any contractual arrangements. In addition, it is difficult to undertake face to face engagement to design a model. It is, therefore, recommended that the current contract is extended for a further year to 31st March 2023.

Overview and Scrutiny Engagement

5. The Health Select Committee Chairman and Vice-Chairman and the Children's Select Chairman and Vice-Chairman are due to have a briefing on this matter in mid-March 2022.

Safeguarding Implications

6. Safeguarding children is a key component of the PHN Service. Health Visiting, Family Nurse Partnership and School Nursing Services are expected to ensure appropriate safeguards and interventions are in place to reduce risks to children and young people from conception where there are safeguarding concerns. When concerns are identified they will work in partnership with key services to intervene effectively in line with agreed local safeguarding protocols. This proposal is not believed to pose any risk to the safeguarding of children, young people or vulnerable adults.

Public Health Implications

- 7.1 Central to the PHN Service is the delivery of the national Healthy Child Programme (HCP), a universal evidence-based prevention and early intervention programme that aims to ensure that every child gets the good start they need to lay the foundations for a healthy life. It is an integral part of Public Health England's priority to support healthy pregnancy, ensure children's early development and readiness for school, and reduce health inequalities in young children.
- 7.2 Good health, wellbeing and resilience are vital for all our children and there is strong evidence that robust children and young people's public health is important to achieve this. Universal and targeted public health services provided by health visiting and school nursing teams are, therefore, crucial to improving the health and wellbeing of all children.
- 7.3 The Healthy Child Programme is based on the concept of 'proportionate universalism' recognising that it is not sufficient to focus solely on the most

disadvantaged to reduce health inequalities. Services must be available to all and able to respond to the level of presenting need. This is one of the key messages from the Marmot Review of health inequalities (2010).

- 7.4 The foundations for virtually every aspect of human development including physical, intellectual, and emotional development, are established in early childhood.

Procurement Implications

Any extension or award of contract should be done in line with the Public Contract Regulations 2015 (PCR2015) and Part 10 of the Council's Constitution,

In recommissioning this service for 1 year from the 1st April 2022 advice will be sought from the Strategic Procurement Hub to ensure compliance with the PCR 2015 as above.

Equalities Impact of the Proposal

9. The equalities impact of the proposed decision is believed to be low against all criteria on the Equalities Risk Criteria Table and, therefore, a full Equalities Impact Assessment is not required.

Environmental and Climate Change Considerations

- 10.1 It is anticipated that energy consumption and associated emissions will not alter from their current levels as a result of this proposal.
- 10.2 A transformation programme implemented by the current provider in the early part of the contract demonstrates a commitment within the contract to reduce the impact on the environment and reduce emissions. This included reducing the number of buildings staff were working out of; eradicating paper records; and introducing mobile working which has enabled staff travel to be more efficient.
- 10.3 Consideration of opportunities to further reduce carbon emissions will be incorporated into the due diligence exercises.

Risks that may arise if the proposed decision and related work is not taken

11. If the proposed decision is not taken, the Local Authority will have to commission the service separately as the CCG is not in a position to agree any new model or contract until they move to become a constituted Integrated Care Board in July 2022.

Risks that may arise if the proposed decision is taken and actions that will be taken to manage these risks

- 12.1 There is a risk that the provider declines the request to extend the contract. The result would be that the Local Authority would need to run a separate commissioning exercise with less time to complete it. An early and open dialogue will be required to mitigate this.

Financial Implications

13. The Council's position is that the financial value of the contract should not change for the proposed extension. Any variation to the contract price will be contained within the Public Health and Children's Commissioning budgets.

Legal Implications

- 14.1 Any procurement exercise should be conducted in accordance with the requirements set out in Part 10 of the Council's Constitution, the SPH Manual and the Public Contract Regulations (2015). Legal Services will need to be engaged throughout this process, with the relevant legal and procurement advice sought.
- 14.2 Wiltshire Council's Legal Services must draft robust legal documentation for this matter. Legal Services will need to be consulted to review the final documentation before execution.
- 14.3 Cabinet should delegate authority to enter into the contract and any relevant legal documentation to an appropriate individual.

Workforce Implications

- 15 There are no direct employment issues as a result of the recommendations for Council staff.

Options Considered

- 16.1 The options are to:

- (a) extend the contract by one year or
- (b) not to extend and end the contract on 31st March 2022.

- 16.2 Option (b) would prevent us from considering the option of a collaborative commissioning arrangement with BSW CCG as they are not in a position to agree a contract at this time due to the delay to the implementation of ICBs. It would also not allow for due diligence of the options under consideration, including co-creation with families, children, and young people on the new model if required.

- 16.3 There are risks with the preferred option:

- BSW CCG is completing a due diligence on Twenty/20 Equity Group (HCRG is a sub group of this) needs to be completed, planned to be completed in March 2022. As the results of this are unknown, this is something of an unknown risk. Any decision around suitability of HCRG (Twenty/20 Equity Group) delivering the one-year additional year of services proposed here, would need to be a risk-based

decision around the challenges of not proceeding and the viability of finding any other provider for either a short contract or pursuing a full procurement process.

- The Council and CCG do not know how the short-term contract would be perceived in terms of length and cost; this cannot be known until a clear negotiating position is agreed which is what this paper seeks to determine.

Conclusions

- 17 Cabinet agrees to the negotiation of a one year contract which is held by the CCG with HCRG Care Group for a further 12 months until 31st March 2024 to enable officers to complete due diligence on the options outlined and undertake a full consultation with children, young people and families as required. It is recommended that the decision to award a one year contract is delegated to the Director of Procurement & Commissioning in consultation with the Director of Public Health, Corporate Director-People and Corporate Director-Resources/Deputy Chief Executive and the and the Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Skills and Cabinet Member for Public Health, Public Protection, Leisure, Libraries, Facilities Management and Operational Assets. A further paper will come to April Cabinet to recommend the long-term model of a future service.

Helen Jones (Director of Procurement & Commissioning)

Kate Blackburn (Director of Public Health)

Report Author: Sally Johnson, Public Health Strategist (0-24 years),
sally.johnson@wiltshire.gov.uk

Date of report: 10th February 2022