

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

26 April 2022

Subject: **Substance Misuse Procurement**

Cabinet Member: **Councillor 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:

Seek authority from Cabinet to commence a procurement process to secure future substance misuse services in Wiltshire.

Wiltshire Council's Public Health Team are the lead commissioner of both young people and adult's substance misuse services. To date these two services have been commissioned separately and are due to expire on 31st March 2023.

Wiltshire's health needs assessment exploring the impact of substance misuse across the whole life course identified a need to strengthen the offer for young people transitioning to adult specialist support services.

Wiltshire remains committed to tackling the impacts of drugs and alcohol on our local population's health and wellbeing, recognising the cross-cutting harms caused by it.

A single, integrated community hub model operating across the life course, based on need, will help to ensure an accessible and equitable offer for Wiltshire residents.

Proposal(s)

That Cabinet:

a) Agree a procurement process is undertaken for a joint young people and adults' substance misuse service to enable the provision of future services in Wiltshire from 2023.

b) Delegate authority for awarding the contract to the new service provider/s

to the Director of Public Health in consultation with the Corporate Leadership Team and Cabinet Member for Public Health and Public Protection, Leisure, Libraries, Facilities Management and Operational Assets.

Reason for Proposal(s)

The current contracts will expire on 31st March 2023, this paper asks Cabinet to agree the recommissioning of substance misuse services in Wiltshire.

Wiltshire's health needs assessment identified a need to strengthen the offer for young people transitioning into adult specialist support services, therefore we are proposing a single, integrated life course model which would help support young people transitioning and reduce disengagement.

The commissioning of substance misuse services is funded by the Public Health grant, with contributions from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC), under the responsibility of the Director of Public Health. Delegating responsibility for contract award, reduces award delay and negates the potential for a gap in service delivery.

Terence Herbert
Chief Executive

Wiltshire Council

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Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this report is to seek authority from Cabinet to commence the procurement process to secure future substance misuse support services for both drugs and alcohol in Wiltshire. The paper presents the rationale to support a single, integrated substance misuse service across the life course for Wiltshire residents.

Relevance to the Council's Business Plan

2. The effective commissioning and management of substance misuse services in Wiltshire, to reduce health inequalities and improve health outcomes is underpinned by the key themes of the Wiltshire Council Business plan 2022- 2023.
 - Prevention and early intervention
 - Improving social mobility and tackling inequalities
 - Understanding communities
 - Working together

Background

3. Tackling substance misuse has been a priority both nationally and locally in Wiltshire for many years. Wiltshire Council's Public Health team is the lead commissioner of both young people and adult's substance misuse services.
4. Many adult problem drug users have long histories of substance misuse often starting before the age of 18. Research suggests that those most susceptible to developing problematic substance misuse problems are from 'vulnerable groups' such as children in care, persistent absentees or exclusions from school, young offenders, the homeless and children affected by parental substance misuse. Providing well-funded, targeted, and effective substance misuse services is therefore vital.
5. The Health and Social Care Act (2012) introduced a new duty for all upper-tier and unitary local authorities in England to take appropriate steps to improve the health of people who live in their areas. On 1st April 2013, local

authorities became responsible for improving the health of their local populations. This was based on local need, through the provision of a range of public health services and interventions, including the prevention and treatment of alcohol and drug misuse.

Impact of drugs and alcohol on Wiltshire populations

6. Whilst opiate cohorts remain stable, the biggest increase in Wiltshire has been related to alcohol referrals. The adult service currently holds a case load of **690** which is broken down by substance in table 1 below. The average age of those in treatment is between **35- 39 years old**. The following table (Table 1) indicates the breakdown of those in treatment and the increasing numbers in treatment from 2020 to 2021.

Table 1

Substance	December 2021	December 2020
Alcohol	195	140
Alcohol & non-opiate	69	36
Opiate	389	387
Non-Opiate	37	54
Total	690	617

7. Drug use within Wiltshire is below the national average with 0.44% of the population using either opiates or crack cocaine vs 0.88% nationally. In Wiltshire there are an estimated 1,168 opiate users and 1,072 crack cocaine users. However, for Wiltshire, the greatest prevalence remains alcohol consumption. It is estimated that 28.7% of Wiltshire adults drink more than the maximum recommended amount of alcohol per week which is higher than the national average of 25.7%. Increased levels of drinking can place additional pressure on services in the short to long term, including increased blue light calls, hospital admissions and the need for early assistance from support services. It is estimated that there are more than 3,960 individuals who are dependent on alcohol in Wiltshire.
8. The adult service has experienced increased complexity of cases and found the recruitment of staff challenging at points, particularly during the COVID - 19 pandemic. However, they have continued to perform to a high standard, remaining in the national upper quartiles for treatment with an outstanding CQC (Care Quality Commission) report.
9. The last national study conducted in 2018 concluded that 44% of secondary school children reported having an alcoholic drink, whereas local reporting suggests this is 53% for Wiltshire. Nationally, 18% of 11–15-year-olds reported using drugs in the last year, whereas local reporting suggests just

8%. However, 70% of young people who smoke tobacco have tried illegal drugs in Wiltshire.

10. Our young people's service currently holds an average case load of approximately **105**, cannabis remains the primary substance of use in line with national trends and the average age in service is **16-17 years** old. This is an outreach model, which has adapted well to the challenges faced throughout the pandemic since March 2020. They have remained an accessible service utilising social media platforms and outdoor spaces.
11. The transition between young people and adult services is an area where many young people disengage from the system. The average age of users in the adult service is **35-39**, however, national evidence suggests the most common initial drug use occurs aged **15-19**, suggesting a wide gap between initial use and presentation later, or disengagement from the young people service before re-presenting to adult services many years later with higher dependency needs.
12. There have been only **3** successful transitions into adult services from young people's (April – December 2021). The health needs assessment acknowledges that more needs to be done to mitigate this and to support transitioning from young people to adult services, this supports the life course approach embedded within the FACT (Families and Children's Transformation) programme and is an emerging trend in commissioning arrangements for drug and alcohol services.

Strategic Response

13. Tackling the impacts of substance misuse in Wiltshire sits within the governance arrangements of the Community Safety Partnership. In 2019, the Wiltshire Drug and Alcohol strategy was adopted by the Drug and Alcohol Strategic Group and Community Safety Partnership. The strategic vision is to *'work collaboratively to reduce the impact and harms caused by alcohol and drugs on individuals and the wider community.'*
14. In December 2021, the national drug strategy '**Harm to Hope**' published its 10-year policy ambition with a key focus on the following points –
 - Break drug supply chains
 - Deliver a world-class treatment and recovery system
 - Reduce the demand for recreational drugs.
15. The strategy proposes additional funds as denoted by the universal grant, for 3 years and existing funding to be protected to support the delivery of local service provision. This is discussed further in the financial section of the report.
16. The delivery of the strategic priorities allows partners to focus on the key issues highlighted by the health needs assessment and will consider the above priorities. This activity will also shape the landscape for future commissioning.

Current Service Provision

17. The current two services are commissioned separately. The young people's service: Motiv8 managed by DHI (Developing Health and Independence), has been in place since 1st April 2015. This recently went through an external procurement exercise and DHI were awarded an additional year until 31st March 2023, with an optional extension clause until 31st March 2024.
18. The adult's service: IMPACT managed by Turning Point since 1st April 2018, is co-commissioned with Swindon Borough Council and is in place until 31st March 2023.
19. Due to the difference in demographics across Wiltshire and Swindon, a decision has been made to disaggregate the contracts to focus and align our own service provision to our population's needs.
20. It is recognised that by taking this approach we will need to ensure that we do not disrupt service provision for clients accessing Swindon's hub.
21. In addition, there are several smaller contracts which are due to be re-commissioned alongside the adult and young people's contract. Commissioners are keen to streamline and consolidate these to offer a more robust and effective management and delivery mechanism.

Main Considerations for the Council

22. Currently, Wiltshire Council commission two separate core contracts. Both young people and adult substance misuse contracts are set to expire on 31st March 2023. The Council are asked to agree to a full procurement process to commission substance misuse services based on local need.

The council are asked to consider the following steps.

- To endorse the recommendation to consolidate the wider contracts within one core contract across the life course, building an appropriate service model based on local need. This will use identified funding from the Public Health grant and Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner.
- To support the commencement of the commissioning process.

Overview and Scrutiny Engagement

23. Work will also begin on undertaking market engagement events with wider stakeholders as part of the commissioning cycle process.
24. This paper was produced following a collaborative discussion between the Corporate Leadership Team and the Director for Public Health. The Cabinet

member for Public Health, Councillor Blair-Pilling has also been consulted with in advance of this cabinet meeting.

25. The chair and vice-chair of the Health Select Committee were informed that this report would be presented to Cabinet. The committee will be informed of the Cabinet decision and the agreed provider(s).

26. The chair and vice-chair of the Community Safety Partnership were informed that this report would be presented to Cabinet. The partnership will be informed of the Cabinet decision and the agreed provider(s).

Safeguarding Implications

27. Safeguarding cross cuts, the substance misuse agenda and as such, there are strong processes in place to ensure that service providers identify those at risk of harm and/or exploitation and those concerns are reported appropriately. Public Health work closely with both adult safeguarding teams and children's support and safeguarding teams to ensure that any risks, concerns, or incidents are escalated in line with council protocols and procedures.

28. The safeguarding of vulnerable people may be impacted upon should there be a delay in procuring and awarding a contract to an appropriate provider/s. A gap in service provision could pose a significant risk to service users.

Public Health Implications

29. This proposal will have an impact on, or implications for, people's health and well-being and factors which determine people's health. This may include, but is not restricted to, direct health implications, sustainability, maintaining a healthy and resilient environment, economic impacts, reducing or widening inequalities and the wider determinants of health (e.g., good housing, employment opportunities, social isolation). Data relating to the Wiltshire population and community areas can be found at: <https://www.wiltshireintelligence.org.uk/>

30. Substance misuse can have a detrimental impact on anyone. A key function of public health is to reduce potential risks of harm caused by substance misuse, by increasing protective factors and addressing root causes. This will reduce health inequalities and improve wider health outcomes for our population.

Procurement Implications

31. A compliant procurement process will be followed in line with Public Contract Regulations 2015.

32. The procurement process will be designed and run, in conjunction with the Strategic Procurement Hub.

Equalities Impact of the Proposal

33. An equalities impact assessment has not been undertaken on this proposal. However, it should be noted that some users of some of this service may fall into certain protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 (age, sex, gender, sexual orientation, race). The council will ensure that the newly commissioned provider will meet any duties under the Act.

Environmental and Climate Change Considerations

34. Environmental and climate change considerations do not affect the decisions required within this proposal, however, the changes with digital access will ensure that the service supports climate change by reducing travel across the county.

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

35. There is a service delivery risk, should the procurement recommendation not be approved; Wiltshire would not have any substance misuse support services post 31st March 2023 to support some of the most vulnerable residents in Wiltshire.
36. Failure to procure the services will result in a failure to comply with the statutory duty as stated in the Health and Social Care Act, 2012.
37. Should delegated responsibility not be given, the council runs the risk of a delay in awarding a contract to the preferred provider, which in turn could lead to a delay in service delivery.
38. Failure to procure a supplier. However, early advertising of the opportunity should help establish desire of the market to compete for this contract.
39. Inflated prices due to lack of competition in marketplace or enhanced service costs, resulting in an insufficient contract value.
40. Procurement not completed on time, this is unlikely as the process has already started with the counsel of legal and an agreement in draft.

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

41. If only one supplier responds to the Prior Information Notice (PIN) this could be awarded via a negotiated procedure however, there could be a challenge from other organisations when the Voluntary Ex-Ante Transparency Notice (VEAT) is issued, so we would need to keep a robust evidence trail to justify using the negotiated procedure.
42. Responsibility for contract award goes to the named Chief Executive. Should there not be a named Chief Executive at time of award, then contract award responsibility will revert to Cabinet.

Financial Implications

43. The Adult core contract is currently **£1,977,143.00**; this consists of **£1,871,153.00** funded directly from the Public Health grant and an additional annual contribution from the Office for the Police and Crime Commissioner of **£105,990**. In addition, the Public Health grant funds a number of smaller Substance Misuse contracts which equate to a total value of **£697,455**, this includes **£255,000** for young people's substance misuse service. Both parties remain committed to continue this funding for the full duration of the contract period.
44. The total budget spend for substance misuse in Wiltshire is **£2,674,998.00**.
45. The national 10-year drug strategy 'Harm to hope' proposes additional funding to support its local implementation. Final confirmation of the next 3- yrs funding is pending, but we anticipate it to remain in the region of £236,000 (as per 21/22 budget year). The strategy also wants existing funding to be 'protected' to support the delivery of local service provision.

Legal Implications

46. The service will be tendered and commissioned in line with the laws that govern the procurement of services and in accordance with the Council's Constitution.

Workforce Implications

47. All elements of the service being commissioned are currently outsourced and therefore it is not anticipated that there will be any transfer of Wiltshire Council employees, however, depending on the outcome of the procurement exercise there may be a transfer of existing outsourced staff under the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006.

Conclusions

48. The current contracts for the existing services expire on 31st March 2023 and there is now the requirement to commission further service provision as of 1st April 2023.
49. Agree that a procurement process is undertaken to enable the provision of future substance misuse services in Wiltshire.
50. Delegate authority for awarding the contract to the new service provider/s to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Public Health, Corporate Leadership Team and the Director of Public Health and Public Protection, Leisure, Libraries, Facilities Management and Operational Assets.

Professor Kate Blackburn, Director of Public Health

Report Author: Kelly Fry – Public Health Principal.

Background Papers

The following documents have been used in the preparation of this report:

[Wiltshire Substance Misuse Strategy \(2019\)](#)

[Wiltshire Substance Misuse Health Needs Assessment \(2019\)](#)

[Drug Strategy 2021](#)