

# Report to Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing

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**Decision to be taken on or after 24 December 2019**

**Decision can normally be implemented at least  
3 working days after decision has been signed.**

**Cabinet Member Report No. HW09.19**

**Title:** Decision to Award Healthwatch, community engagement and IHCA Contract  
**Date:** 16 December 2019  
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**Local members affected:**

*For press enquiries concerning this report, please contact the media office on 01296 382444*

## **A. Summary**

Buckinghamshire County Council is required to recommission a service to provide statutory Healthwatch, Community Engagement and Independent Health Complaints Advocacy (IHCA) services support services as the current providers contract expires in March 2020. The proposed recommissioning exercise will result in improved sharing of information to inform service delivery in Buckinghamshire and offer a single point of access for community engagement. This report recommends the award of the contract to Provider A, following successful submission of a competitive tender process.

## **Recommendation**

**The Cabinet Members are asked to approve the decision to award the contract for the Healthwatch, community engagement and Independent Health Complaints Advocacy to Provider A.**

## **B. Narrative setting out the reasons for the decision**

The new provider will offer a contract to engage with the residents of Bucks to analyse their experiences of services and work with the Council and Buckinghamshire clinical commissioning group to improve service performance and develop future provisions. The recommissioned service has a delivery model that will be responsive to the evolving priorities of local communities, support the prevention agenda and develop independence and inclusion.

In June 2017 Buckinghamshire County Council was announced as one of eight local authorities implementing the Integrated Care System (ICS) in the country. An ICS works towards delivering better, safer and more joined up health and care for the communities we serve. The aim of the ICS is for the local NHS to work closely with social care and the voluntary sector to improve services. The revised carer support service will align to the objectives of the ICS.

Provider A has submitted a tender that is responsive to the changing needs of residents and offers innovative methods of engaging alongside their experience of established relationships with professional and VCS organisations to enable effective signposting, information and advice. The Provider has offered a model that allows the exchange of data between Healthwatch and IHCA services to ensure that peoples experiences are used to improve services and ensure that future developments are meeting people's needs.

#### **C. Other options available, and their pros and cons**

There are no further extension options available within the current contract.

If the decision to award is not agreed the Council may risk a gap in service whilst a revised service is commissioned. This will result in a detrimental impact to Councils statutory responsibilities under the Health and Social Care Act 2014. A further recommissioning exercise could take some considerable months and may be subject to challenge as Provider A has been subject to a rigours commissioning and procurement process.

#### **D. Resource implications**

The revised Healthwatch, community engagement and IHCA service will allow for resource to be focused on delivering support across Buckinghamshire to residents with varying levels of need.

Robust processes have been followed to ensure that the provider is offering value for money.

Following award there will be a period of implementation which will require both the provider and the officer commitment.

#### **E. Value for Money Self-Assessment**

An open and competitive tender process was followed and the successful provider submitted a tender that meets the requirements of the specification and was within the financial envelope available for the service.

## **F. Legal implications**

A competitive process was followed in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders and Legal Services have advised on Terms and Conditions of this contract.

Legal advice has been sought with regards to the operation of the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 in relation to existing staff employed in the provision of the current service.

## **G. Property implications**

No property implications have been identified.

## **H. Other implications/issues**

All key risks have been identified and appropriate mitigation is in place.

With any recommissioning exercise there can be implications for the current provider including risks associated with their ongoing viability.

## **I. Feedback from consultation, Local Area Forums and Local Member views**

Cabinet Members have been involved and informed throughout the development and subsequent tendering of the Healthwatch, community engagement and IHCA service.

## **J. Communication issues**

Communication will be managed using a robust plan, prepared in partnership with the current providers and the Council's communications team.

As there are a large number of residents and stakeholders impacted, communication will be tailored accordingly.

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## ***Your questions and views***

*If you have any questions about the matters contained in this paper please get in touch with the Contact Officer whose telephone number is given at the head of the paper.*

*If you have any views on this paper that you would like the Cabinet Member to consider, or if you wish to object to the proposed decision, please inform the Democratic Services Team by 5.00pm on 23 December 2019. This can be done by telephone (to 01296 382343), or e-mail to [democracy@buckscc.gov.uk](mailto:democracy@buckscc.gov.uk)*