
Contract for Preventative Services known as Link Up, Growing for All and Friendship Skills

Portfolio Member: Councillor Graham Bridgman

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose

This report is to inform Commercial Board of the commissioning route that has been undertaken to procure specific day services for clients with a learning disability known as Link Up, Growing for all and Friendship Skills. This report is also to request an exception to the contract rules of procurement to sign off the retrospective award of this contract to West Berkshire Mencap

1.2 Objectives of the procurement

Adult Social Care require a range of learning disability (LD) services to cater for a broad LD client base. This ranges from residential and high support forensic care settings, domiciliary care, supported living and day services options.

West Berkshire Mencap have for a number of years been delivering day services and supported employment opportunities for LD clients. These services have grown organically over the years and were delivered in an unofficial block and spot arrangement and waiting lists were historically managed by the old Learning Disabilities team within ASC.

The service is made up of three distinct elements which are as follows:

- Link Up - work skills in a sheltered employment workshop in Central Newbury. Clients carry out a number of basic tasks such as sticking on labels, making Christmas cards, stuffing envelopes
- Growing4All - a therapeutic gardening project at Cottismore Park, near Kingsclere.
- Friendship skills – assisting clients to develop basic social skills

The services provide social support, work skills and an educational underpinning to assist individuals to develop their work skills, personal skills and develop their motor skills - the structured approach. It enables individuals with an LD to develop their skills and independence in a safe and supported environment and at their pace.

In 2014 Commissioning on behalf of ASC launched the Voluntary Sector Prospectus (VSP) process. The aim of the prospectus was to deliver a range of preventative services for clients with all needs across the district, which included supported

employment and day services. It was at that time envisaged that Link Up, and G4A services would be incorporated into the VSP.

However after two rounds of the VSP, it became clear that these services did not neatly fit into this process.

It was then decided that the services would be procured via the day services framework. However WBMencap inflated their prices through this process for all clients regardless of whether they were existing clients or new clients. ASC policy is that existing clients should remain on their current rate

We have been at stalemate with Mencap August last year with no agreement in place.

There have not been any other LD providers come forward and demonstrated the ability to deliver or replicate the service during the three tender exercises that have been carried out in the past 4 years.

The service as it is currently delivered is invaluable to ASC as it delivers on the preventative Care Act requirements for clients with a learning disability.

It has taken the last 9 months and a number of meetings including Tandra Forster and Councillor Rick Jones as ASC portfolio holder to get to a position whereby we could come to an agreement on price. Currently at the time of writing, there are only 7 clients which are in receipt of friendship skills via ASC on Care Director. The agreement was that the service would be backdated to 1st April 2018. Unfortunately this has not allowed for the decision making process to take place.

For this reason I am requesting a retrospective exception from the contract rules of procedure to award the Link Up, Growing for All and Friendship skills services to West Berkshire Mencap a three plus two year contract.

2. Implications

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| 2.1 Financial: | ASC have made provision for price increase in budget |
| 2.2 Policy: | This service will support ASC deliver its requirements in respect of the Care Act 2014. |
| 2.3 Personnel: | N/A |
| 2.4 Legal: | Request retrospective exception to contract rules of procedure to allow for retrospective contract award to West Berkshire Mencap. |
| 2.5 Risk Management: | Exceeding 120 hours and purchasing service on a spot basis will increase This will put a pressure on ASC budgets. ASC will manage the waiting list through resource panel to mitigate this where possible. Other risks outlined below |

- 2.6 **Property:** N/A
- 2.7 **Other:** Currently there are no other services of this type available for clients with a learning disability in West Berks. Commissioning with work with ASC and other providers in the district to develop a wider range of services over the life of this new contract

3. MARKET ANALYSIS

3.1 Current supply – there are currently no other providers who can deliver these services in the area. There have been three processes carried out in the last three plus years; two rounds of the VSP and the day services framework. Throughout all these processes there has no other provider who are able deliver these services. West Berkshire Mencap also have the infrastructure. They own a large warehouse on the Hambridge Lane industrial estate which was donated to them by Greenham Common Trust to deliver these services. They also own an allotment in Cottesmore which delivers the G4A service. This service will shortly be locating to Mencap's offices in Enborne Road.

The is a market development exercise which will take place post contract award to stimulate the market in this area and develop more competition

3.2 Duration of contract

Contract will be awarded for 3 years plus a 2 year extension facility. There will be a six month break clause which can be implemented should there be a wish to recommission the service before that date

4. SAVINGS ANALYSIS

4.1 Adult social care costs are currently under pressure and increasing due to national living wage pressures and cost of care provision. WBMencap have not had a price uplift for approximately 7 years. Should ASC need to purchase outside of the block then they will pay an increased rate. However ASC will manage a waiting list of clients to ensure that the block is exceeded only in extreme circumstances and any agreement to pay outside of the block will need to be signed off by ASC Resource Panel and HoS.

4.2 Key risks

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Owner	Counter Measure
ASC will be required to purchase outside of the block	Medium	Budget pressure in ASC	Tandra Forster/ Paul Coe/ Roz Haines	ASC will manage a waiting list for the block which will not be exceeded except in extreme circumstances and will require sign off by HoS and Resource Panel

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Owner	Counter Measure
Lack of competition in the market	High	Only one provider - WBMencap	Commissioning /ASC	Use the next three years to carry out market analysis and incentivise other providers to provide similar services in the district
Achieving political sign off for procurement strategy and service implementation	Medium	Lack of political sign off will mean inability to deliver service which will impact upon ASC preventative agenda	Portfolio Holder/ Commissioning/ Head of ASC	Cllr Jones is fully signed up to the process that has been undertaken and will brief management board.

4.3 Key stakeholders

Councillor Rick Jones – Portfolio Holder for ASC

Tandra Forster – Head of ASC

Roz Haines Business Manager ASC

Paul Coe Service Manager ASC

June Graves Head of Commissioning

Shiraz Sheikh – Interim Service Manager Legal Services

Karen Felgate Service Manager Commissioning

5. Conclusion

5.1 It is recommended that Executive agree the retrospective exception to the contract rules of procedure and agree to the award of a 3 plus 2 year contract to West Berkshire Mencap for Link Up, Growing for All and Friendship Skills block contract.