

Title of meeting: Cabinet Member Community Safety

Date of meeting: 1st October 2020

Subject: Domestic Abuse Services Tender

Report by: Director, Children, Families and Education

Wards affected: All

Key decision: Yes

Full Council decision: No

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To seek cabinet approval to bring a contracted service and an in house service together as one specialist service for victims and perpetrators of domestic abuse (DA) and to go out to tender for that service.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the lead member for Community Safety agrees to retender domestic abuse provision until 31st March 2024 with an option to extend by 3 years (plus 1, plus 1, plus 1) at a maximum contract value of around £4.4m over 6 years.
- 2.2 That the lead member for Community Safety approves an annual budget transfer of £39,500 to the Children and Families Portfolio to recruit an additional domestic abuse practitioner for the Family Safeguarding Service.

3. Background

- 3.1 Current DA provision is provided by:
- 3.1.1 Portsmouth IDVA¹ Project (PIP) supports high risk victims of domestic abuse. The team consists of 1 manager and 7 FTE IDVA's all employed by Portsmouth City Council.
- 3.1.2 Stop Domestic Abuse is the current commissioned provider (jointly commissioned by PCC² and OPCC³) providing support to medium risk victims of DA, refuge, support to children and group provision. The 3 year contract ends March 2021 with the option to extend for 2 years.
- 3.1.3 Support to those who use abusive or unhealthy behaviours (perpetrators) in their intimate partner relationships is provided by Stop Domestic Abuse who deliver PCC's bespoke Up2U programme. The Big Lottery currently funds the

¹ Independent Domestic Violence Advocate

² Portsmouth City Council

³ Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner

manager and 2 practitioner posts with an additional post funded from PCC and OPCC.

3.1.4 Support for standard risk victims of domestic abuse is currently provided by Victim Care and commissioned by the OPCC. There are no plans for this provision to be included in the new tender.

3.1.5 Support through statutory family safeguarding services, which provide DA support alongside addressing safeguarding risk for dependent children. This is also is not part of the proposed tender.

3.2 It is proposed that current funding of the existing services is used to fund the new model. This would include £162,650 of annual funding from the OPCC which has confirmed that it wishes to join us in this contract. The proposed total annual DA contract value is around £0.7m. This brings together the current contract value plus the cost of the current in house service.

3.3 PCC Children and Families Services, in partnership with adult services, has developed a Family Safeguarding Model to further improve the safeguarding of children and their families. The service consists of 12 specialist adult workers with expertise in domestic abuse, adult mental health and substance misuse (4 workers for each specialism) however as 78% of the families supported have domestic abuse as an issue it is proposed that an additional 1FTE practitioner (£39,500) is diverted from the current victim provision to support families open to children social care where DA is an issue.

4. Reasons for recommendations

4.1 The latest community safety strategic assessment, presented to the Health and Wellbeing Board on 23 September 2020 highlights the fact that significant levels of domestic abuse continue to threaten and impair the lives of many in Portsmouth.

4.2 Current arrangements for victims is fragmented and can lead to confusion about which specialist DA services is best placed to meet individual's needs. This is further complicated within some relationships where both adults are using abusive behaviours and rather than refer to a victim service for one and perpetrator service for another; an alternative of working with both adults on their behaviours is the best option. Therefore combining support to those who use abusive or unhealthy behaviours on the same provision deals with fragmentation across all specialist domestic abuse services.

4.3 It is proposed that the new specification will include provision for all high risk and medium risk victims of domestic abuse, provision for those who use abusive or unhealthy behaviours in the intimate partner relationship, refuge, children and group support. It is also proposed that the specification includes requiring that the provider receives all referrals through a single point of access and undertakes a more in depth assessment that not only includes the individual adult referred, but their partner and any children and identifies how best to respond (e.g. a clear victim provider response

or provide support to both partners). This will improve the response and provides flexibility of provision to meet individual need.

- 4.4 The specification will be informed by a market engagement event and the contract will include clear performance indicators. It is proposed that the provider should attend a public meeting with the lead member for community safety on an annual basis to review both performance and the insights which work in delivering the contract has generated about the issues affecting residents.
- 4.5 While there is no statutory duty to provide DA support Safe Lives recommends that there is 1 FTE IDVA per 100 referrals a year. PIP has 7 FTE IDVA's in line with demand (708 in 2019/20 and 683 in 2018/19). While transferring funding to the Family Safeguarding Service will reduce capacity in the contracted domestic abuse service, this will be compensated by the increased capacity within the Family Safeguarding Service. The PCC targeted early help service also provides support to significant numbers of families every year and will ensure strong links with the provider for this contract so that the earliest possible support can be provided to families when problems arise.
- 4.6 Tendering the contract within the voluntary sector will bring added value to Portsmouth residents as the voluntary sector are able to access other funding that is not available to Local Authorities. However it is recognised that organisations have different pay and conditions; this will be considered within the tender process.
- 4.7 Offering a contract until March 2024 with an option to extend for 3 years (on a plus 1, plus 1, plus 1 year basis), does not commit the new Police and Crime Commissioner to a long term contract and provides the option for flexibility with other Hampshire contracts (e.g. HCC contract expires in 2024 with an option to extend for 2 years). It is envisaged that the new contract will start on 1st July 2021 with the specification published January and contract awarded 1st April 2021.

5. Integrated impact assessment

- 5.1 An integrated impact assessment is not required, as the recommendations do not have a negative impact on any of the protected characteristics as described in the Equality Act 2010. There is no change to policy and while there is a change to service provision all applicants will need to demonstrate how their provision is accessible.

6. Legal implications

- 6.1 The proposed remodelled/combined service will be procured by a compliant competitive tender process in accordance with the requirements of the City Council's Contract Procedure Rules and the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.
- 6.2 The proposed conjoining, within the proposed combined service, of services which are currently provided in-house with services which are currently provided by an external provider will have staffing implications which will be managed in accordance with the City Council's relevant HR policies and, in particular, the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 (as amended) ("TUPE").

7. Director of Finance's comments

7.1 The actual cost of the contract will not be known until the service has gone out to tender. However, it is envisaged that the current service budgets will cover the cost. A decision on the contribution from the OPCC for the duration of the contract is due to be made on 14th October.

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Signed by:

Appendices:

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location

The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/ rejected by on

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Signed by: