

**13 November 2017****Agenda Item: 11****REPORT OF THE DEPUTY CORPORATE DIRECTOR, ADULT SOCIAL CARE  
AND HEALTH****PROCUREMENT OF THE HANDY PERSONS ADAPTATION SERVICE  
(HPAS)****Purpose of the Report**

1. To seek approval to proceed with the procurement of the Handy Persons Adaptation Service (HPAS).

**Information and Advice****Background**

2. The HPAS service has been delivered by the Council since 2010. It is a partnership arrangement with the seven district and borough Councils, the Checkatrade scheme and a number of small or medium size local traders who deliver the service to people in their own home. The Council co-ordinates the service on behalf of the other councils who now fund the service through the Better Care Fund.
3. Over the past 12-18 months, discussions have been ongoing about the future model and viability of the service. As part of these discussions it has been identified that the services provided by the traders should be tendered for in line with procurement regulations. There have also been changes to the Construction and Design Management Building Regulations 2015 which have implications for the Council and traders in terms of duties and responsibilities.
4. This report is requesting approval to proceed with a tender process to ensure that the Council is meeting its obligations and achieving best value.

**Current Service**

5. The purpose of HPAS is to carry out basic and practical maintenance tasks and to fit simple adaptations to enable service users (older people or a person with a disability) to continue to live independently in their own homes. This also prevents them from having to access more expensive and less independent forms of residential accommodation or hospital.
6. There are two elements to the HPAS service – adaptations such as installing simple equipment like grab rails or key safes and Handy Persons which involves either home maintenance or simple repairs. The Handy Persons jobs are provided at a set rate of £15

as a one off payment which is paid by the service user; the fitting of the minor adaptations is free to the service user.

7. The adaptations are the main part of this service; in 2016/17 a total of 3,976 jobs were delivered of which 91% were adaptations. The average price for a job was approximately £119 and the budget is approximately £450,000 per annum. This covers costs associated with the Customer Service Centre, traders and materials.
8. Prior to June 2015, the Council oversaw the recruitment and checking of the traders through its own Trading Standards “Buy with Confidence” scheme. This was replaced by Checktrade as approved at Community Safety Committee in July 2015. Checktrade ensures that traders are fully checked and reliable suppliers of services. The Council is currently working with Checktrade to extend the range of services offered to HPAS including a greater level of scrutiny on health and safety policies and practice.
9. Although the Council is no longer the primary funder of this service it retains overall co-ordination of the service which is through a single point of access at the Customer Service Centre. CSC staff receive service user referrals, check eligibility and contact traders on the approved list to arrange service delivery within agreed time scales. This model allows for flexible and timely responses as there are a number of traders available, supports local businesses and gives the referrer greater access to information and advice from the Customer Service Centre.

## **Future Developments**

10. Members will be aware that the Council is required to adhere to proper processes around procurement of services. The service is funded by districts and borough councils' contributions through their Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) from the Better Care Fund (BCF). Over the last 12 months the Council has worked closely with the districts and borough councils to agree the future model of the service in order to ensure that it is more efficient and comprehensive.
11. The Council retains the responsibility of procuring the adaptation and minor works services as it co-ordinates the service overall and the funding is managed through the Council. The tender will result in an improved, streamlined service which will be delivered through an agreed payment structure.
12. The Council will continue to work with partners and traders in preparation for the procurement activity. Sessions will be provided for small traders who may not have the knowledge or expertise to submit tenders. The Council will offer support and guidance to ensure that all the providers get an opportunity to bid.
13. The proposed model will build on the strength of the current system which has one point of access and a number of traders who can respond quickly. So access to the service will continue through the Customer Service Centre which will continue to provide co-ordination and oversight of the service. There will be a number of approved providers or traders in each district and Checktrade will continue to provide an enhanced checking service offering greater customer security. Quality monitoring will be undertaken by district and borough councils who will check a sample of up to 10% of actual jobs delivered.

## **Other Options Considered**

14. Other options have been considered and discounted as follows:

- Continue with the existing model: this is not viable as it would leave the Council and traders potentially vulnerable under the Construction and Design Management Building Regulations and would not achieve best value or adhere to procurement regulations.
- Tender for one large provider which would remove the service from the Customer Service Centre which currently handles all HPAS calls, allocating jobs to traders, processing trader invoices and producing monthly monitoring for partners: this could result in a fragmented service. The current model of using small traders provides a quick response to customers and supports the local economy.
- Distribute the service across seven districts but it would then cease to be a County wide joined up service. This option could potentially affect the Customer Service Centre and reduce the opportunities for small traders.

## **Reason/s for Recommendation/s**

15. The Council seeks approval to proceed with the procurement of the HPAS service. A tender exercise will ensure that the Council is using a regulated, robust, cost effective and transparent method to obtain this service.

## **Statutory and Policy Implications**

16. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

## **Financial Implications**

17. The cost of this work will be managed within the existing HPAS budget.

## **Human Resources Implications**

18. The proposed model will ensure the continuation of service through the Customer Service Centre.

## **Implications for Service Users**

19. HPAS offers clients a prompt low cost service which if withdrawn could lead to an increase in numbers of service users accessing more expensive and less independent forms of residential accommodation or hospital.

## **Implications for Sustainability and the Environment**

20. The current model of HPAS supports the local economy by using small and local traders and also reduces carbon emissions through localised traders.

## **RECOMMENDATION/S**

- 1) That approval is given to proceed with the procurement of the Handy Persons Adaptation Service.

**Paul McKay**

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## **Constitutional Comments (SLB 19/10/17)**

21. Adult Social Care and Public Health Committee is the appropriate body to consider the content of this report.

## **Financial Comments (DG 19/10/17)**

22. The financial implications are contained within paragraph 17 of this report.

## **Background Papers and Published Documents**

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

Update on Key Trading Standards Matters – report to Community Safety Committee on 14<sup>th</sup> July 2015.

## **Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

All.

