

21st January 2015**Agenda Item: 5****REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH****DOMESTIC ABUSE SERVICES PROCUREMENT
– AMENDMENT TO REPORT****Purpose of the Report**

1. To update members of the Public Health Committee about the Domestic Abuse procurement specifically in relation to:
 - seeking confirmation of the budget allocation for Domestic Abuse ahead of the final decision on the allocation of the full Public Health budget for 2015/16.
 - the commissioning of refuge provision for survivors of Domestic Abuse.

Domestic Abuse Budget 2015-16

2. The PH committee gave approval for a joint procurement process with the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) in September 2014 which is now well underway. The process of allocating the Public Health budget for 2015/16 is also underway. However, it is currently forecasted that this process is unlikely to conclude before March 2015.
3. In order to avoid delay in the procurement process it is necessary to confirm the PH domestic abuse budget allocation by February 2015. The timing of this is to ensure commissioners are absolutely sure of the total joint budget between NCC and PCC in time for the Prequalifying Questionnaire (PQQ) stage of the procurement process.
4. NCC is under considerable financial pressures and budgets across the Council face reductions. As much as it is undesirable to reduce funding for victims of domestic violence and abuse an indicative reduction of £100,000 is proposed against a total Public Health commitment for domestic abuse of £1,192,438.

Refuge provision

5. Current commissioning arrangements for refuge provision are complicated. The reasons for this are largely historical. Repeated attempts by NCC and key stakeholders to resolve this in respect of the proposed procurement have not come to fruition.
6. The Department of Communities and Local Government currently has funding for 2014/15 and 2015/16 to support refuge provision. The funding is available to housing authorities and is capped at £100,000 per local authority. However, a countywide bid is being compiled by

district councils, domestic abuse services and partners with the intended purpose of sustaining current refuge accommodation and where possible to enhance service infrastructure. It is noticeable that this is a significant amount of funding and has recently resulted in a somewhat more harmonious dialogue between the refuge providers.

7. If the countywide bid is successful, over the course of the next 12 months it will become apparent as to how and where the DCLG funding has been utilised. This will provide commissioners with further information as to any potentially new or different refuge provision arrangements arising from the impetus of the DCLG funding that could in the future be commissioned or even included within the newly procured service.
8. Given these developments, NCC and PCC intend to omit refuge provision from the scope of the current tender and seek to review and commission refuge provision under a separate contractual arrangement at a later date. Current provision will be sustained for one year through an extension of the current contract with existing providers so as to ensure service continuity and place the providers in the best position possible to benefit from the funding.

Financial Implications

9. The 2014/15 PH domestic abuse commitment is £1,192,438. This paper proposes an indicative reduction of £100,000. Consequently this paper is seeking PH committee approval, prior to the final approval of the total PH budget, of a domestic abuse budget allocation of £1,092,438 for 2015/16.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

10. The primary reason for the decision to approve the DA budget in January 2015 is to avoid any delay in the procurement process. The reason for the placing refuge out of scope of the current DV procurement process is to allow time for the benefits of central government funding to materialise and time to work through current complexities regarding refuge provision.

Statutory and Policy Implications

11. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, the public sector equality duty, human resources, crime and disorder, human rights, the safeguarding of children, sustainability and the environment and those using the service and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

RECOMMENDATION/S

12. The Public Health Committee is asked to:

- Note the content of this report
- Approve the proposal to reduce the Public Health budget for domestic abuse for 2015/16 by £100,000
- Support the commissioning plans for refuge services.

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Director of Public Health

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Constitutional Comments (ADK 15/01/15)

13. The Public Health Committee has delegated authority within the Constitution to approve the recommendations in the report.

Financial Comments (KAS 15/01/15)

14. The financial implications are contained within paragraph 8 of the 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.

- Equality Impact Assessment has been completed and is available on request from the report's author
- Papers from agenda item 5 from 11th September 2014

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All