

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL**CABINET MEMBER FOR PUBLIC HEALTH AND HEALTH & WELLBEING BOARD.****DATE: 15 JANUARY 2014****LEAD OFFICER: SUSIE KEMP, ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE****SUBJECT: EXTENSION OF GRANT AGREEMENT FOR HEALTHWATCH SURREY****SUMMARY OF ISSUE:**

Healthwatch is the independent consumer champion for both health and social care. From 1 April 2013 Surrey County Council has had a statutory responsibility to commission a local Healthwatch service for the county.

A one year grant agreement (from 1 April 2013) for the provision of Healthwatch Surrey was awarded after a competitive bidding process. The agreement included the option of extending for a further year - this report seeks agreement to extend the grant agreement for the provision of Healthwatch Surrey for one additional year from 1 April 2014.

This report demonstrates why the recommended contract extension delivers best value for money for Surrey County Council.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that the grant agreement for the provision of Healthwatch Surrey is extended for one additional year from 1 April 2014.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Health and Social Care Act 2012 introduced a new role for local authorities in the co-ordination, commissioning and oversight of health and social care, public health and health improvement. This new role included a statutory duty to commission a local Healthwatch service from 1 April 2013.

The existing one year grant agreement awarded for the provision of Healthwatch Surrey comes to an end on 31 March 2014.

DETAILS:**Background – what is Healthwatch?**

1. Healthwatch is the independent consumer champion for both health and social care. It exists in two distinct forms – local Healthwatch (i.e. Healthwatch Surrey), at local level, and Healthwatch England, at national level.
2. From 1 April 2013 Surrey County Council has had a statutory responsibility to commission a local Healthwatch service for the county.

3. The overall aim of local Healthwatch is to give residents and communities a stronger voice to influence and challenge how health and social care services are provided within their locality. Local Healthwatch provides, or signposts, people to information to help them make choices about health and care services.
4. Local Healthwatch is an independent organisation, able to employ its own staff and involve volunteers, to become the influential and effective voice of the public. The legislation also requires local Healthwatch to be established as a social enterprise.
5. The remit of Healthwatch includes both adults and childrens health and social care (unlike its predecessor, the Surrey LINK, which focused on adult health and social care only). Healthwatch Surrey also has a statutory place on the Surrey Health and Wellbeing Board.
6. Local Healthwatch's role includes:
 - providing information about local health and care services;
 - enabling people to share their views about their local health and social care services to help build a picture of where services are doing well and where they can be improved;
 - alerting Healthwatch England to concerns about specific care providers;
 - the ability (or 'power') to enter and view all publicly funded health and social care services either as unannounced spot checks or at agreed monitoring visits;
 - playing an integral role in the preparation of the statutory Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy;
 - providing evidence-based feedback to organisations responsible for commissioning or delivering local health and social care services;
 - helping clinical commissioning groups to make sure that services really are designed to meet residents' needs; and
 - promoting the voice of local service users and carers in the commissioning of services, and in doing so, champion equality of health and care access and provision.

Establishing Healthwatch Surrey

7. A one year grant agreement (from 1 April 2013) for the provision of Healthwatch Surrey was awarded after a competitive bidding process. Surrey's chosen provider is a consortium led by Help & Care with Surrey Independent Living Council and Citizens Advice Surrey as principal sub contractors.
8. Surrey County Council has worked closely with the consortium in the lead up to and since 1 April 2013 and regular officer performance meetings have been used to track implementation and delivery.
9. Significant progress has been made including:

Engagement

- A community engagement exercise involving visits to all 11 boroughs / district in Surrey (incl. hospitals, shopping centres, high streets, national rail stations) with over 12,000 Healthwatch Surrey postcards given out to members of the public;
- A wide range of engagement activity to raise the profile and understanding of Healthwatch Surrey with a programme of events, visits and networking across the county - in the three months to the end of September 2013 this involved reaching over 6,000 people (either people attending events or Healthwatch Surrey postcards given out);
- Over 2,000 health / social care enquiries received through the Surrey Citizens Advice Bureaux offices between April and September 2013 with an additional 85 'interactions' through other media (email, telephone, website etc);
- An active use of social media – Healthwatch Surrey's twitter account has made over 1,250 tweets and has added almost 800 followers since April 2013 (as at 16 December 2013);

Influencing

- In its influencing role, Healthwatch Surrey has been represented at each of the meetings of the Surrey Health and Wellbeing Board and has attended or provided presentations to the Council's Health Scrutiny Committee, the Surrey and Sussex Quality Surveillance Group¹ and through meetings and contacts with Healthwatch England and the Care Quality Commission;
- A review of stroke rehabilitation services in Surrey which was used to highlight the good work of local Healthwatch as part of the launch of Healthwatch England's first annual report;

Governance

- Healthwatch Surrey Non-Executive Director posts (including the Chair) have been appointed to through an independent appointments panel process and the company 'Healthwatch Surrey CIC' (Community Interest Company) has been incorporated.

10. Key aspects of the work programme and / or challenges for Healthwatch Surrey in the second six months of the grant agreement include:

- Recruitment and training of volunteers to help raise the awareness of Healthwatch (Ambassadors) and to undertake 'enter and view' visits to health and social care services across Surrey (Authorised Representative);
- Collating data from a wide range of sources to identify trends and emerging issues to share with commissioners of health and social care services and to inform the Healthwatch work programme;
- Building up networks and relationships with other community organisations across Surrey; and

¹ From April 2013, NHS England established a new network of Quality Surveillance Groups to provide leadership for quality improvement.

- Undertaking specific projects such as the current review of people's experience of booking appointments with their GP and a review of complaints across health and social care.
11. Council officers are working closely with colleagues at Healthwatch Surrey to enhance performance monitoring arrangements to ensure the continued development of the service and its ability to be an effective independent consumer champion for health and social care in Surrey.

Extension to the grant agreement

12. The progress that has been made in establishing Healthwatch Surrey as detailed above and the regular performance meetings have provided assurance that the local Healthwatch service is being delivered in line with the grant agreement and confidence that the current provider can continue to achieve the outcomes described in the grant agreement:

- Ensuring the rights of Surrey's most vulnerable citizens are protected and promoted;
- Local Healthwatch is trusted by people who use health and social care services and by the public;
- Local Healthwatch is systematically networked with all sections of the community;
- People who use health and care services know the purpose of local Healthwatch, are engaged with it and use it as a source of information and support;
- Local Healthwatch is known to be an independent voice speaking on behalf of users of health and social care services; and
- The public use local Healthwatch as a means to put forward their experiences, views, concerns and ideas in relation to improving health and wellbeing in the local community.

13. In light of the above, this report recommends that the grant agreement for the provision of Healthwatch Surrey is extended for one additional year from 1 April 2014.

CONSULTATION:

14. Copies of this report were shared with key stakeholders through the drafting process including senior officers in Adults Social Care and Children, Schools and Families directorates, as well as officers in the Councils Legal, Procurement and Commissioning and Finance services.
15. Presentations on the progress of Healthwatch Surrey have been made in year to the Surrey Health and Wellbeing Board and to the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

RISK MANAGEMENT AND IMPLICATIONS:

16. Risk management forms an important part of the Council's procurement and commissioning process and the way in which it manages contracts / grants. This includes:

- The agreement includes a Termination Clause. This will allow the Council to terminate the agreement with three months notice should priorities change or funding no longer be available.
- To mitigate any shortcomings should these arise in delivering services the Terms & Conditions of the Agreement include standard provision for:
 - i. Recovery of monies on behalf of the Council
 - ii. Default
 - iii. Dispute resolution
- As part of the initial procurement process financial checks, as well as checks on competency were successfully completed by the consortium.

17. The following key risks associated with the contract and contract award have been identified, along with mitigation activities:

| Category | Risk Description | Mitigation Activity |
|-----------|--|---|
| Financial | Budget changes | Specification is designed to facilitate flexibility in service levels if needed |
| Service | Healthwatch is a new service and may take time to become established | Performance monitoring and agreeing the transition and implementation plans. |
| | Geographical coverage may be sporadic | Performance monitoring and liaison with provider |
| | Poor quality of service and service does not deliver National and or Local Objectives. | Strong performance / contract management and quarterly contract review meetings will mitigate the risk of a poor quality service. |

Financial and Value for Money Implications

18. The value of the Grant Agreement is £504,000 per annum.

19. The funding for this grant for the additional year from 1 April 2014 is included within the existing Medium-Term Financial Plan.

Section 151 Officer Commentary

20. The Section 151 Officer (Chief Finance Officer) confirms that the cost of this contract extension is included within the Medium Term Financial Plan and that all material, financial and business issues and risks have been considered/addressed.

Legal Implications – Monitoring Officer

21. The statutory duty under the Health and Social Care Act 2012 which amended the provisions of the Local Government and Public Involvement in

Health Act 2007 requires the Council to have an arrangement with a body corporate for an efficient and value for money service to be available for prescribed activities pursuant to regulations made by the Secretary of State. The terms of the grant agreement entered into complies with this requirement. Reference is made in the equalities section to the public sector equality duty which is an important consideration in delivering this service.

Equalities and Diversity

22. Local Healthwatch will be subject to public sector duties as detailed in the Equality Act 2010
23. The bidding process was conducted under the principles of equalities and diversity and these issues were considered throughout the process.
24. The grant will be managed and monitored in line with Surrey's obligations under the equalities monitoring framework.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

25. Subject to approval, the provider will be advised of the intention to extend the Grant Agreement. Following on from the Cabinet call-in period and ten days standstill the variation will be issued to the provider for signature and return to the Council to be stored in line with Procurement Standing Orders.

Contact Officer:

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Consulted:

Christian George – Category Manager Adults
Andy Tink – Principal Accountant
Carmel McLoughlin - Legal
Copies of the draft report were also shared with:
Dave Sargeant - Assistant Director for Personal Care and Support
Nick Wilson - Strategic Director of Children, Schools and Families
