

NORTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE SHADOW AUTHORITY

SHADOW EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

3 February 2021

Report Title	Approval for Delegated Authority – Intention to Tender for Complex Autism Services
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List of Appendices

Appendix A – Background PowerPoint - the issues that need resolving

Appendix B – Draft Commissioning and Contract Framework

Appendix C – Draft Service Specification

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. This report seeks approval to give delegated authority to Katie Brown, Interim Director of Adult Social Services, for permission to proceed with a tender for complex autism services for autistic people over the age of 14 years. The tender is a joint tender between the Key Partners; NASS, The Children’s Trust and Northamptonshire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). NASS is acting as the lead Commissioner.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 Key Partners have been working to address system weaknesses in our ability to support very vulnerable autistic individuals with complex needs. Partners began working together in November 2019 to consider solutions and work through shared issues and common themes. Partners agreed to jointly tender for services suitable for a specific and identifiable cohort of autistic individuals whose needs continue to challenge all services and whose long term health and well-being outcomes will remain poor without a shared and combined approach to meeting care and support needs from the age of 14 years upwards. The progress of the Tender has been severely delayed whilst Partners have responded to the Pandemic, however we now have the opportunity to take this forward.

The provision of delegated Authority to Katie Brown will allow us to proceed with the procurement process with a single executive authority on behalf of the Councils.

- 2.2 This report provides a brief summary of the issues the Tender seeks to address and confirms the approach to tender agreed by all Partners. The report also indicates a timeline to contract award and the expected spend throughout the life of the contract.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Shadow Executive Committee:
- a) Approve delegated authority to Katie Brown, Interim Director of Adult Social Services to give permission to proceed with the tender for complex autism services for autistic people over the age of 14 years.
- 3.2 Reason for Recommendations:
- a) The option aligns most closely previous decisions relating to Adult Social Service routes to procurement where procurement of care and support services is necessary to meet unmet need.
 - b) The future Council and customers will receive the maximum benefit from the option proposed and the proposal is aligned to the adult and children's care transformation agenda.

4. Report Background

- 4.1 Our local priorities and intentions for autistic people are laid out in the Northamptonshire All Age Autism Strategy 2018-2021. The priorities and intentions represent the changes that need to take place to improve the experiences and health and well-being outcomes of autistic people in Northamptonshire.
- 4.2 Nationally health and social care systems are being asked to procure more creative and outcome focussed support solutions for autistic people whose care and support needs are generally not well met within standard care and support services. The tender of this new Contract Framework – the Commissioning for Brighter Futures Framework - seeks to inspire the provision of high quality and workable commissioned solutions for those individuals who are perceived to be at the 'top end' of need, that is; individuals who continuously lead highly fragile and vulnerable lives in environments that have lacked understanding and purpose and which have focussed on managing and holding risk rather than nurturing independence and opportunity through highly individualised support arrangements that work for each individual.
- 4.3 Following the introduction of the **Autism Act 2009**, the government's first strategy for autistic adults in England, **Fulfilling and Rewarding Lives** was published in 2010. This addressed the long term ambitions about how public services must reflect and adapt to the needs of autistic adults. It set out the

government's overarching vision; 'All adults with autism are able to live fulfilling and rewarding lives within a society that accepts and understands them. They can get a diagnosis and access support if they need it, and they can depend on mainstream public services to treat them fairly as individuals, helping them make the most of their talents.' (Fulfilling and Rewarding Lives: the strategy for adults with autism in England, 2010). The national strategy was refreshed in 2014 with the release of **Think Autism**. This set out a programme of action to improve the lives of autistic people and brings a renewed emphasis on involvement and awareness of autism within the local community, as well as ways to look differently at support and engagement. A series of 15 Priority Challenges for Action are identified to highlight the key themes that the strategy aims to deliver. The government announced in late 2018 that a national autism strategy review will be conducted during 2019, which will see the strategy extended to include children and young people. Statutory guidance was produced in 2010 (and updated in 2015) to accompany the national adult autism strategy. It sets out responsibilities and legal duties that Local Authorities and NHS bodies must achieve in line with the Autism Act 2009. It also specifies responsibilities that should be delivered and achieved to ensure autistic people are supported. **The Care Act 2014** provides a coherent approach to adult social care in England and sets out new duties for local authorities and partners and new rights of service users and carers. Some of the responsibilities placed on local authorities through the Autism Act 2009 and accompanying papers are strengthened by the introduction of the Care Act, as the new legislation highlights the need for improvement of services and support for autistic people. Similarly, the **Children and Families Act 2014** does the same and has an emphasis on personalisation, outcomes and integration of services. It provides a change in the way services provide support for children, young people and those with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) and focuses on the best outcomes for each individual. In 2015, **Building the Right Support**, a national plan to develop community services and close inpatient facilities for people with a learning disability and/or autism who display behaviour that challenges, including those with a mental health condition, was published. The document sets out a requirement for Clinical Commissioning Groups, Local Authorities and NHS England to work together to develop local Transforming Care Partnerships. **The NHS Long Term Plan**, released in early 2019, has highlighted learning disabilities and autism among the key priorities for NHS services over the next 5-10 years, and sets out a series of commitments to improve the services and support currently being provided.

- 4.3 The Senior Leadership teams in NASS and in Children and Young People's services gave approval to proceed with a Commissioning Framework and tender preparation in January 2020. The Commissioning Framework aims to inspire brighter futures for an identifiable group of autistic individuals with autism and/or attachment disorder, some of whom will also have diagnosed mental health problems, where we have found it consistently difficult to apply

the right support and mentoring arrangements by virtue of expecting 'one size fits all' services to be able to flex and work outside of the traditional commissioning approaches used to date.

5 Issues and Choices

5.1 The Government's vision is: "All adults with autism are able to live fulfilling and rewarding lives within a society that accepts and understands them. They can get a diagnosis and access support if they need it, and they can depend on mainstream public services to treat them fairly as individuals, helping them make the most of their talents".

These are unique individuals who require us to think outside of the box in order to apply consistent and stable services that have the tenacity and creativity to provide the platform for brighter futures. We fully acknowledge that these individuals have presented us, all statutory agencies as well as our care, support and education providers, with challenges associated with:

- Criminal behaviours
- High risk behaviours such as substance misuse
- Sensory needs fulfilled by regular contact and use of emergency services and which are soothed by self-harm
- Self-neglect
- Vulnerabilities associated with cuckooing/gangs/exploitation
- Hoarding and OCD
- Family/parental anxiety and dysfunction
- Frequent engagement and then disengagement
- Histories of failed/wrong support arrangements which can escalate risk and cause further problems
- Challenges that increase as they enter adulthood
- Childhood traumas that have been inadequately supported or are untreated therapeutically
- Child inpatient becoming an adult inpatient because needs have not been met

5.2 In identifying the intended recipients of the services that will be generated through this Contract Framework we have defined an absolute commonality across adult and children and young people's services:

- All individuals have been assessed under our statutory frameworks
- Individuals do not fit into mental health services
- Individuals do not fit into learning disability services
- The experience is that unmet need as a child becomes an unmet need as an adult – with serious consequences
- All Partners recognise the need to 'do something different'

5.3 The Framework and tender for specific services has been arrived at by considering the needs of those who are most vulnerable and in need of a different commissioning response.

6 Implications (including financial implications)

6.1 Resources and Financial

6.1.1 The Contract is for a period of 4 years with an annual review cycle. Each package of care will be attributed as a spot/call-off package and as such there is no guaranteed contract value to each provider.

6.1.2 The total anticipated spend for the life of the contract is estimated as £20m. Spend is currently attributed across the Partners and this will remain so.

6.2 Legal

6.2.1 There are no legal implications arising from the proposals.

6.3 Risk

6.3.1 There are no significant risks arising from the proposed recommendations in this report.

6.4 Consultation

6.4.1 Proceeding with the Tender and Commissioning Framework responds to the extensive consultation and engagement period undertaken in 2018 in order to conclude the Northamptonshire Autism Strategy. The Framework and the commissioning objectives have been coproduced with autistic individuals and experts by experience and profession. Include the details of any statutory or other consultation undertaken with the public and/or agencies/interested parties. Also include the consultation results and any amended recommendations to draft policy or proposals that have resulted. If you have not undertaken any consultation please say so and explain why it was not appropriate to consult, or if you are about to consult, please explain how it will be done.

6.5 Consideration by Overview and Scrutiny

6.5.1 None.

6.6 Environmental Impact

6.6.1 None.

6.7 Community Impact

6.7.1 None.

6.8 Equalities

6.8.1 There are no negative impacts.

7 Background Papers

7.1 None.