

EXECUTIVE

17th August 2023

Report Title	Re-procurement of NHS Health Checks Programme for North Northamptonshire Council
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Lead Member	Councillor Helen Harrison – Executive Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing

Key Decision	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for call-in by Scrutiny?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there public sector equality duty implications?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information (whether in appendices or not)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Applicable paragraph number/s for exemption from publication under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972	N/A

List of Appendices

None

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. To advise the Executive as to options available relating to the NHS Health Check programme and to advise the Executive as to the options that will have the most beneficial impact for the residents of North Northamptonshire.
- 1.2. To seek delegated authority to the Executive Member for Adults Health and Wellbeing in consultation with the Director of Public Health and The Director of Finance, to reprocure the NHS Health Checks programme for the residents of North Northamptonshire for one year (April 1st 2024 to March 31st 2025), with options to extend for up to two further years in two increments of twelve months.
- 1.3. Approval is needed to procure an open framework of NHS Health Check providers for 1st April 2024. This will enable the Council to continue with the

current NHS Health Checks model, where delivery is carried out by a practitioner, either in a primary care or via a community/workplace setting.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1. North Northamptonshire Council (and on behalf of West Northamptonshire Council) currently commissions NHS Health Checks for residents of North Northamptonshire and West Northamptonshire. The arrangement ends on 31st March 2024, with no further options to extend. A review of current provision has been conducted and available options have been considered.
- 2.2. It is proposed that:
 - i. The NHS Health Checks programme will be disaggregated from 1st April 2024 onwards. The annual contract of £350k will be paid from North Northamptonshire Council's core Public Health Grant budget to fund NHS Health Checks completed with residents of North Northamptonshire only.
 - ii. NHS Health Checks are re-commissioned by North Northamptonshire Council for an initial term of one year with extensions available for up to a further 24 months in two increments of 12 months.
 - iii. There will be no joint arrangement with West Northamptonshire Council
 - iv. A mixed model of GP practices and community providers will be contracted to deliver the NHS Health Checks programme.
- 2.3. Payment is based on activity; the annual contract value will be £350k. This will be met from the core Public Health Grant budget. The total value including available extensions is £1,050m (3 years).
- 2.4. The Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) will enable new providers to contract with the Council throughout the term of the agreement, maximising value for money, provider assurance and market engagement for the Council.
- 2.5. Following a robust procurement process, providers will be awarded contracts under the DPS, having been assessed against a range of assurance tools, minimising risk to the Council.

3. Recommendations

3.1. It is recommended that the Executive delegate authority to the Executive Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing in consultation with the Director of Public Health & Wellbeing to:

- i. Reprocure the NHS Health Checks programme for the residents of North Northamptonshire.
- ii. Award a 3-year contract (comprising of an initial term of 1 year, with options to extend in increments of twelve months).

3.2. Reasons for Recommendations:

- i. The proposed option accords with the Local Authority's responsibility under the Health and Social Care Act 2012 to provide the Health Check Assessment to eligible individuals in a local authority's area.
- ii. The proposed option delivers on a 'Key Area' NNC's Transformation Strategy to 'review, design and deliver splitting of West/North hosted/shared services' by North and West Northamptonshire procuring NHS Health Checks separately for their respective residents.
- iii. The recommendation maintains consistency with previous decisions to re-procure the NHS Health Check programme.
- iv. The recommended action is cost-effective, while maximising benefit to eligible patients in the North Northamptonshire area.

3.3. Alternative Options Considered:

- i. The option to not re-procure the NHS Health Checks programme was considered but rejected on the grounds that it would have a negative impact on the health and wellbeing of the residents of North Northamptonshire and the Council would not be fulfilling its legal obligations.
- ii. The option to re-commission the NHS Health Checks programme jointly with West Northamptonshire Council was considered but rejected on the grounds that the proposal would not align with North Northamptonshire Council's Transformation Strategy.

4. Report Background

4.1. The NHS Health Check is a cardiovascular disease prevention programme delivered across England. It aims to improve the health and wellbeing of adults aged 40-74 years through earlier awareness, assessment and management of the major risks factors and conditions driving premature death, disability and

health inequalities in England. In doing so it will help to prevent heart disease and escalation of health needs e.g., disease, stroke, diabetes and kidney disease. Identification and treatment earlier in life will help prevent onset of disease and help people live well for longer. The programme also raises awareness of dementia both across the population and within high risk and vulnerable groups.

- 4.2. Local Authorities have a responsibility under the Health and Social Care Act 2012 to provide the NHS Health Check assessment to eligible individuals in a local authority's area. The legislation states that each local authority shall provide, or shall make arrangements to secure the provision of, NHS Health Checks to be offered to eligible persons in its area.
- 4.3. North Northamptonshire Council (and on behalf of West Northamptonshire Council) currently has contracts in place for the delivery of NHS Health Checks. This is a mandated service funded through the Public Health ring-fenced grant. Providers are currently commissioned on a framework agreement. On the framework, North Northamptonshire Council have contracts with three GP federations (of which one sub-contracts a leisure trust in Northampton), two smaller groups of GP practices, one standalone GP practice, and three community providers not affiliated with primary care.
- 4.4. The current framework agreement started 1st April 2019 for an initial term of three years. Two extensions of twelve months each were available, taking the contract to its maximum term of 5 years. The framework now expires 31st March 2024. No further extensions are available.
- 4.5. Eligibility criteria for the NHS Health Check programme:
 - i. Resident of North Northamptonshire
 - ii. Aged 40 to 74
 - iii. Patient has not had an NHS Health Check in last 5 years
 - iv. Patient has not been prescribed statins for the purpose of lowering cholesterol
 - v. Patient has not been identified as having a twenty per cent or higher risk of having a cardiovascular event during the ten years following the proposed NHS Health Check (identified during previous NHS Health Check or through other check-up).
 - vi. Patient has not been diagnosed with coronary heart disease, chronic kidney disease (stage 3, 4 or 5), diabetes, hypertension, atrial fibrillation, transient ischaemic attack (TIA), hypercholesterolaemia, heart failure, peripheral arterial, disease or stroke.
- 4.6. The North Northamptonshire Public Health team are currently carrying out a full-service review of the NHS Health Check programme. This is using the StARS (Systematic Approach to Raising Standards) Framework tool and NHS Health Check performance data made available through a locally commissioned IT Solution, currently provided by The Computer Room Nottingham Ltd. The outcomes of the service review will inform changes to the new service specification to bring about service improvement, reduce variation

in uptake, address health inequalities and address wider quality issues.

- 4.7. The planned procurement timetable allows for a 3-month mobilisation period in which providers successful in their application to the NHS Health Check framework will be supported to carry out patient engagement to improve the quality of their offer. Providers will be supported to improve communications with residents in the communities in which they work, improving uptake of NHS Health Checks.
- 4.8. The proposed duration of the new contract is a maximum of three years (an initial term of one year, with options to extend in increments of twelve months up to three years).
- 4.9. Nationally, an evaluation of a digital offer for NHS Health Checks is being led by Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID). A date for the NHS Health Checks digital offer to 'go live' has yet to be published, with the evaluation still in its early stages. Beta testing of the digital offer will be rolled out on a national scale. A Beta version of the digital check will be made available to the public in April 2024. This will inform local commissioning.
- 4.10. North Northamptonshire Council will exercise extensions available up to the point where a re-modelled offer inclusive of digital NHS Health Checks has been commissioned and mobilised in North Northamptonshire. Service re-design will begin following the conclusion of the Beta phase of testing and publishing of national guidance.

5. Issues and Choices

- 5.1. Choice 1: Whether to re-commission the NHS Health Checks programme.
 - i. North Northamptonshire Council has a legal obligation to provide an NHS Health Check programme for the resident of North Northamptonshire. Re-commissioning the programme was the only option considered.

5.2. Choice 2: NHS Health Check Service Model

- i. An options appraisal was conducted to establish the most appropriate model for the programme.
- ii. From the options considered below, Option 2 was chosen.

Option	Benefits	Negatives
Option 1: Primary Care Only Model	Full coverage of North Northamptonshire	No community options

<p>A model where only GP practices can deliver NHS Health Checks</p>	<p>Utilises existing providers</p>	<p>No flexibility to deploy providers within areas most in need</p> <p>Would limit NHS Health Checks to one setting</p> <p>Fewer NHS Health Checks would be completed.</p>
<p>Option 2: Continue with Existing Model</p> <p>A mixed model of Primary Care and Community provision. Continuous service development and improvement to expand pool of community providers and improved payment terms to incentivise quality.</p>	<p>Full coverage of North Northamptonshire that utilises existing providers</p> <p>Can carry out NHS Health Checks in workplaces and community settings</p> <p>Will maximise the amount of NHS Health Checks completed</p>	<p>Community providers often require closer monitoring and Public Health support as health and wellbeing interventions such as the NHS Health Check are not necessarily their main area of work.</p>
<p>Option 3: Commission NHS Health Checks away from Primary Care</p> <p>To remove responsibility of delivering NHS Health Checks from Primary Care altogether.</p>	<p>Providers commissioned will be expected to prioritise NHS Health Checks</p>	<p>There is no evidence to suggest this approach works. Case studies suggest opposite, with one local authority reporting a 90% reduction in NHS Health Checks completed when using this model.</p> <p>Not enough interest from providers locally to introduce this model.</p>
<p>Option 4: Develop Bespoke Digital Offer</p> <p>To develop a means of offering digital NHS Health Checks.</p>	<p>NHS Health Checks could be completed on a scale equal to or better than what is currently offered.</p>	<p>Design and implementation of the digital model would be costly. As a digital offer is being developed nationally, any developments made locally could be made redundant within the next 2 years.</p>

		<p>Full research into the effectiveness of a digital offer is yet to be published.</p> <p>The NHS Health Checks would not be compliant with existing national best practice.</p>
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5.3. Choice 3: Contract length and available extensions

- i. An initial term of one year is the most appropriate option. The NHS Health Check programme will 'go digital' in line with national guidance, subject to successful testing and national rollout. Although a precise date has not yet been made public, 2025 is expected to be the year in which local authorities can begin offering digital health checks.
- ii. An initial term of one year, with extensions up to 24 months, allows the Council to redesign the service in a timely manner in-line with national guidance.

6. Next Steps

6.1 Following approval from the Executive, a procurement exercise will be carried out as per the key timelines detailed below.

Executive	Thursday 17 th August 2023
Tender Published	Wednesday 13 th September 2023
Evaluation	Thursday 23 rd October 2023
Moderation	Monday 20 th November 2023
Contract Award	Thursday 7 th December 2023
10 day standstill period	8 th -18 th December 2023
Contract Start Date	Monday 1 st April 2024

7. Implications (including financial implications)

7.1. Resources, Financial and Transformation

7.1.1 Payment is based on activity; the annual contract value will be £350k. This will be met from the core Public Health Grant budget. The total value including available extensions is £1,050m (3 years).

- 7.1.2 The NHS Health Checks programme will be disaggregated from 1st April 2024 onwards. The annual contract of £350k will be paid from North Northamptonshire Council's core Public Health Grant budget to fund NHS Health Checks completed with residents of North Northamptonshire only.
- 7.1.3 Payments made for NHS Health Checks are based on activity. Payment is made to providers based on the amount of NHS Health Checks that have been completed and the amount of first invites sent to patients. There is provision in existing budgets for the NHS Health Check programme.
- 7.1.4 The existing payment structure for the current NHS Health Check framework is £22 paid per completed NHS Health Check (if the NHS Health Check is compliant) and £2 per first invite to a patient. These payment terms will be kept as part of the new framework. Annually, a bonus per completed check will now be introduced and awarded as follows:
- 50% uptake: extra £1.50 per check
 - 55% uptake: extra £3 per check
 - 60% uptake: extra £5 per check
- 7.1.5 GP providers will be required to invite 100% of their annual eligible population each year. 'Uptake' means what percentage of those invited patients have an NHS Health Check.
- 7.1.6 Assuming a GP practice meets the uptake targets as listed above, the bonus payments would only be paid if invites sent match the target figure (within a set tolerance). Over-inviting can be used to get more patients through for their NHS Health Check at the expense of exhausting a finite patient list and poorer uptake (conversion of invite to completed check). Over-inviting will leave few or no patients left to invite in future months and years. The bonus structure promotes a higher quality of first invite and the use of follow-ups (2nd and 3rd invites and telephone calls) to non-responders of the first invite, rather than sending out an excess of poor quality first invites and no more.
- 7.1.7 No GP practice would have been awarded a bonus as per the proposed new payment structure should it have been in place for 2022/23. This is due to either under-performance or over-inviting. NHS Health Check activity is on an upwards trend and there is every possibility that some practices will be able to achieve these targets in the future. The proposed payment structure would promote best practice as there is an incentive to do so.
- 7.1.8 Non-GP Practice providers (community providers) will not have targets relating to invites and uptake so will not be entitled to bonus payments.
- 7.1.9 The contract value has been adjusted from existing framework to reflect disaggregation, population growth and the introduction of bonus payments. The annual contract value will be £350,000. The total value including extensions is £1,050,000.

7.1.10 The financial implications have been approved by the Finance Business Partner for Public Health and Wellbeing.

7.2. Legal and Governance

7.2.1 Local Authorities have a responsibility under Health and Social Care Act 2012 to provide the Health Check Assessment to eligible individuals in a local authority's area once every five years. An eligible individual is aged 40 to 74 years.

7.2.2 Local Authorities also have a duty under the Health and Social Care Act 2012 to 'take such steps as it considers appropriate for improving the health of the people in its area'. This includes areas such as providing information and advice, providing services or facilities designed to promote healthy living (whether by helping individuals to address behaviour that is detrimental to health or in any other way), providing services or facilities for the prevention, diagnosis or treatment of illness.

7.2.3 There is no option to extend the existing contract past 1st April 2024.

7.2.4 It is intended that the DPS contract awarded following a successful tender process will be for an initial term of 1 year, with option to extend in increments of 12 months for up to 24 months. Appropriate break and variation clauses may be included to enable earlier termination or amendments to the DPS if required by the Council.

7.2.5 The services as described are Schedule 3 services for the purposes of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (PCR 2015) and fall under the light touch regime. The light touch regime refers to the procedural rules applicable to contracts for Schedule 3 services which are valued over the applicable threshold. The current applicable threshold for Schedule 3 services is £663,540 (inclusive of VAT). Accordingly, the procurement must follow a compliant procurement process, under PCR 2015. In addition, the procurement and any subsequent contracts must comply with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and Constitution.

7.2.6 To comply with the Public Contract Regulations (2015) and the Council's Contract Procedure Rules, procurement of the DPS contract must follow the mandatory procedural rules under the light touch regime in compliance with PCR 2015.

7.2.7 Legal services, where instructed, will advise and assist officers with regard to the conduct of the procurement process and the resulting contractual arrangements.

7.3. Relevant Policies and Plans

7.3.1 The NHS Health Check programme will support in working towards the vision, values and key commitments as outlined in North Northamptonshire Council's Corporate Plan.

- Active, fulfilled lives: patients attending the NHS Health Checks will undergo an assessment relating to the physical activity and other areas of their health and wellbeing, promoting healthier and active lifestyle choices.
- Connected communities: NHS Health Checks lifestyle advice and support offered as part of the NHS Health Checks is tailored to the individual. Practitioners delivering the checks work to encourage patients to engage with activities locally and contribute within the voluntary and community sector.

7.3.2 The NHS Health Check programme will be commissioned as per the Council's responsibilities under the Health and Social Care Act 2012.

7.3.3 The proposal will also align with the Council's responsibilities to work across an integrated system in North Northamptonshire.

7.4 Risk

7.4.1 Where delegated authority to re-procure and award is not granted, there is a risk that re-procurement of the NHS Health Checks framework is not completed in a timely manner.

7.4.2 If the contract is not awarded, the Council would be at risk of exacerbating health inequalities in at risk communities by not offering free NHS Health Checks to patients.

7.4.3 If the contract was not awarded, the Council would not be fulfilling its duty under Local Authorities have a responsibility under the Health and Social Care Act 2012.

7.4.4 There is a risk to the Council's reputation if the Council does not fulfil its duty to offer NHS Health Checks.

7.5 Consultation

7.5.1 The Council is not required to consult on the proposal as this is a statutory programme that will be delivered within the boundaries of the mandate.

7.5.2 The Council will however engage with patients and providers as part of continuous service improvement and quality assurance work. Plans are being produced for an extensive consultation process with patients, providers across primary care and providers working within the community. The Integrated Care

Board will be consulted, as will the Northamptonshire Local Medical Committee (LMC). Feedback will inform future service development plans.

7.6 Consideration by Executive Advisory Panel

7.6.1 Service activity has not been considered by Executive Advisory Panel.

7.7 Consideration by Scrutiny

7.7.1 The report is yet to be considered by Scrutiny.

7.8 Equality Implications

7.8.1 The NHS Health Check programme in North Northamptonshire will maintain a 'proportionate universalism' approach to deliver the programme. While everyone eligible for an NHS Health Check should be invited for a health check in a rolling 5-year period, scale and intensity will be adjusted in areas of deprivation and with specific patient groups, proportionate to the degree of need. The programme will be universally available, although targeted to meet the needs of those at higher risk of developing cardiovascular disease and who may belong to one of the most disadvantaged groups within communities across North Northamptonshire.

7.8.2 The new contract will promote a mixed model of delivery in terms of the nature of providers offering NHS Health Checks. The contract will aim for full GP practice coverage of North Northamptonshire, meaning all GP practices are offering NHS Health Checks to registered patients. The framework will also host non-primary care providers to deliver NHS Health Checks to disadvantaged groups and those not registered with a doctor.

7.8.3 As required by Equality Act (2010), an Equality Screening Assessment has been undertaken and has confirmed that the NHS Health Check programme will not adversely impact individuals with protected characteristics. This will be included as part of the report to the Procurement Gateway Group.

7.9 Climate and Environment Impact

7.9.1 The Council will work with providers to ensure health checks are offered in a location local to the patient to minimise travel. The service has use of a separate point of care testing programme which means blood testing can be completed in the same appointment, minimising need to attend a second appointment.

7.10 Community Impact

7.10.1 The NHS Health Check programme will support in maximising employment opportunities within primary care and community-based providers.

7.10.2 The NHS Health Check programme will utilise a proportionate universalism approach whereby at risk/disadvantaged communities will be targeted with health and wellbeing support. NHS Health Check clinics can be paired with other health and wellbeing interventions, meaning a joined-up set of services to support patients in the local area.

7.11 **Crime and Disorder Impact**

7.11.1 No implications identified.

8 Background Papers

8.1 None.