

Report to: Lead Member for Adult Social Care and Health

Date of meeting: 22 March 2022

By: Director of Adult Social Care

Title: Direct Payments Support Service (DPSS) Provision

Purpose: To seek Lead Member approval for the Direct Payments Support Service contract extension

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Lead for Adult Social Care and Health is recommended to:

1. approve a 24-month extension to the current Direct Payments Support Service contract with People Plus;
 2. note the commissioning of the Vibrance contract replacement; and
 3. delegate to the Director of Adult Social Care authority to take all necessary actions to give effect to the implementation of the above contract amendments.
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1 Background

1.1 Direct Payments (DPs) enable any disabled adult or parent of a disabled child who is eligible for a Community Care Service or service provided under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989 to receive an agreed sum of money to purchase the support they need ("Personal Budget") instead of receiving a service directly from the relevant local authority. This also includes services that may be provided to carers under section 2 of the Carers and Disabled Children Act 2000. The Care Act (2014) explicitly encourages direct payments for people accessing care and support.

1.2 Nationally and locally, there is an increased emphasis on personalised care and self-directed support and the use of DPs are one of the key mechanisms for providing eligible individuals with choice and control over how their care and support is provided.

1.3 East Sussex County Council (ESCC) currently commissions Direct Payment Support Services (DPSS) from People Plus Ltd and Vibrance. Both contracts were commissioned through a competitive process in 2018 for a 4-year term (plus an allowable 24-month extension). The original annual contract values are set out below:

People Plus at £624,655 pa (*this includes: £583,492.00 employment core support, employment managed account & payroll and £41,163 ESCC Supported Accommodation and Independent Living Solutions & agency only managed account*).

Vibrance at £11,796 pa (*employment core support, employment managed account & payroll*).

The activity levels have been lower than the original contract value for each of the commissioned DPSSs and the forecast projection of the total spend on the People Plus contract for 2022/23 is not expected to reach that of the original contract value throughout the 24-month extension period.

2 Supporting Information

2.1 The current contract with Vibrance is due to end on 31st March 2022 and Vibrance have requested not to extend. ESCC is therefore recommissioning the work currently undertaken by Vibrance, to a value of £11,796 pa. Whilst this is not of a sufficient contract value to qualify as a Key Decision, it is included in the report to provide assurance that this activity will continue to be delivered by alternative providers and a short contract extension of up to 3 months will be arranged with Vibrance to enable a smooth transition.

2.3 People Plus support a minimum of 449 clients - 348 clients are supported with Employment Core Support (including Disclosure and Barring Service checks), Employment Managed Account Service and Payroll Services and 101 clients with Supported Accommodation (SAILS) and Agency Only Managed Account Services, this number may be greater where other clients manage their own account. There has been a trend in reducing referrals from ASC.

2.4 People Plus have indicated that they would be happy to extend their contract for up to 24 months on current terms and conditions and have expressed an interest in any developmental work as part of the extension and ESCC will work closely with People Plus as part of the extension.

2.7 There are other workstreams underway within ASC that could have significant influence over the future model of DPSS that will be required by ESCC and the population of East Sussex in the future. These include.

- The development of an Adult Social Care Strategy Scoping.
- Increased focus on personalisation when meeting Care Act eligible assessed needs.
- Maximising the use of technology and digital when assessing and meeting peoples needs.
- Reviewing of the Support with Confidence accreditation and the provision of Personal Assistants
- Streamlining the associated 'back office' functions and processes.

These workstreams will determine the future direction, scope and level of activity required from a future service.

3. Conclusion and reason for recommendations

3.1 DPSSs offer vital provision to support eligible individuals with their Direct Payments to meet their care and support needs. It is important that future DPSSs promote personalised care and self-directed support and this extension will enable the development of the future model.

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